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I.—THE BLEEDING LANCE.

I.

Of monographs and studies on the Grail there is no end, but as yet an article dealing primarily with the Bleeding Lance scarcely exists.¹ In the following pages the lance will be kept in the foreground, and the object will be to approach the grail problem from this novel point of attack.

Students of the grail have hardly attached importance enough to the pagan atmosphere, which in the earlier grail stories clings to the bleeding lance, nor given sufficient weight to the fact that the lance is apt to be described first, and is often made more prominent than the grail.²

Our oldest accounts of the grail castle are (apparently) in the unfinished *Perceval* of Chrétien de Troies, written about 1175,³ and in the *Parzival* of Wolfram von Eschenbach, composed about 1205,⁴ but essentially based, according

¹ For references concerning the lance, see Heinzel, *Ueber die französischen Gralromane* (1891), p. 9.

² See, however, Heinzel, p. 10; Martin, in his introduction to his edition of *Parzival*, II, lx, (1903); and Miss Weston in *Sir Perceval*, II, 272.

³ Paris, *Journal des Savants*, (1902), p. 306.

⁴ Martin, *Parzival*, II, xiii.

to the statement of the author, and as now seems probable,¹ upon a lost poem by a French² poet named Kyot ("der Provenzâl" Wolfram calls him, ed. Martin, 827, 5), who doubtless wrote not far from the time of Chrétien. Both Chrétien and Wolfram mention barbaric properties of the bleeding lance, difficult to reconcile with any Christian association, of which they appear to be altogether ignorant.

Chrétien definitely ascribes to his bleeding lance marvellous destructive powers which are manifestly unchristian, and which put it in the same class with the malignant weapons of ancient Celtic story. The Mons ms. of *Perceval* tells us in verses 7538 ff., that a blow from this lance will destroy the entire land of Logres (Welsh *Lloegr* = England):

"Et mesire Gauwains s'an alle	7538
Querre la lance dont li fers	
Sainne tos jors, jà n'ert si ters	
Del sanc tout cler que ele pleure	
Si est escrit qu'il est une eure	
Que tous li roiaumes de Logres	
Dont jadis fu li tière al Ogres	
Ert détruite par cele lance."	7545

Perceval, ed. Potvin, II, 252.

It is probable that an error exists in verse 7545, and that we should read "has destroyed all the land of Logres."³

¹ Baist disagrees, *Parzival und der Gral*, Freiburg, 1909, pp. 14-15.

² Wolfram says that Kyot composed "en franzoys"; *Guiot* is a French, not a Provençal name.

³ *Fut* for *Ert* in verse 7545 would be an easy emendation, but I leave the texts throughout as printed by the various editors. The prose of 1530 puts the destruction in the past: "la lance . . . de laquelle il est escript que tout le royaume de Logres, dont Orges [sic] en fut roy et seigneur, a jadis par ceste lance esté conquis." The Montpellier ms. substitutes for the four verses 7542-5 of Mons, two entirely different verses:—

"Einsi est escript en l'ameure
La pés sera par ceste lance."

Potvin, II, 252.

This variant, as I conjecture, may explain the future tense of Mons. The

Indeed from hints here and there in the poem we may conjecture that this was the lance with which the grail king received his wound, whereupon his land fell to ruin. In verses 6030 ff., Perceval is told that because he did not ask the questions why the lance bled, and whom the grail served, the land will become even more waste and desolate:—

“Tières en seront essillies,
Et pucièles desconsellies ;
Orfenes, veves en remanront
Et maint chevalier en morront.”

Ibid., II, 202-3.

This seems to be a reference to the Enchantment of Britain well known in Welsh legend, which could only be dispelled by breaking a charm, as Perceval might have done had he asked the questions. Rhŷs in his *Arthurian Legend*, pp. 285 ff., 258, 264, has compared the tale of the Enchantment of Britain in the *Mabinogi* of Manawyddan son of Llyr, where likewise men, beasts and crops suffer, houses and castles are thrown into desolation.¹

lance caused the destruction and the war, and will (by healing the king's wound) bring restoration and peace. The careless scribe of Mons put the destruction as well as the restoration in the future. Wauchier puts the destruction in the past, see below, p. 15. Compare, however, Heinzel's comments, *op. cit.*, p. 5. At an earlier verse in *Perceval*, Gawain is told to seek and apparently to fetch the lance:

“Querre la lance dont li fers 7491
Sainne tos jors, jà n'iert tant ters
C' une goute de sang n'i penge ;
Il il cele lance vos renge.”

Ibid., II, 250.

¹ Rhys and Evans, *The Red Book of Hergest*, I, 46 ff., and translation in Loth, *Les Mabinogion*, I, 100 ff.

In the "Elucidation," which is not by Chrétien, occurs another reference to the laying waste of Britain:

“Coment et por coi fu destruis
De Logres li rices païs.
Moult en sot an parler iadis.”

Potvin II 2

No one has hitherto called attention to the numerous parallels in Irish literature to such destruction by enchantment. The *Acallamh na Senorach*, which is preserved in fifteenth century mss., but probably, in this place at least, faithfully represents ancient tradition, tells how Aillén mac Midhna of the Tuatha Dá Dunaan used each Halloween to lull every one asleep and then emit "a blast of fire from his mouth that burnt up Tara with all her gear." This destruction continued twenty-three years until Finn put an end to it by the help of the venomous spear of Fiacha.¹ The *Macgnímartha Find* relates that Finn once cast this same spear of Fiacha (Fiachail) into a fairy knoll, and that it would have brought ruin on the land had it not been thrown out again :—

"Venomous the spear
And venom the hand that threw it.
If it is not cast out of the knoll
A murrain will seize the land."²

We are told that the Irish druids could devastate the land³

¹ *Acallamh na Senorach*, ed. Stokes, *Irische Texte*, iv, i, 47–49. For translation see O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, II, 142–4.

² "Neim in gai
Is neim in lám ro lai de,
Mina curthir assim sidh
Gebaid conach in tir de."

Macgnímartha Find, ed. Kuno Meyer, § 26, *Rev. Celt.*, v, 203. Translation in *Eriu*, i, 189. The ms. was written about 1453, but this incident seems at least as old as the twelfth century; for it is referred to in some detail in a poem by Gilla in Chomded in LL, 145^a. (LL = *Book of Leinster*, a ms. of 1150. LU = *Book of the Dun* written before 1106. My references are to the facsimiles published by the Royal Irish Academy. The Newberry Library in Chicago, by procuring recently the R. I. A. facsimiles of Irish mss. and Rhŷs and Evans' *Welsh Texts*, has given a much needed encouragement to Celtic students in this region).

³ *Cath Maige Turedh*, *Rev. Celt.*, xii, § 80. On the age of this saga see below, p. 36.

and that dwellers in the *Sidh* could produce an illusion of destruction.¹

Wolfram, like Chrétien, fails to give to his bleeding lance any trace of Christian coloring, and it seems evident that no such coloring could have been suggested to him by the source from which he took the story. Wolfram was not the man to paganize a Christian object. His temper was decidedly mystical and religious, and nothing would have delighted him more than to connect his bleeding lance with Christian teaching. At more than one point in his narrative he is puzzled by the barbaric character of his lance, and somewhat nonplussed² by this brilliant piece of decoration, evidently bequeathed to him by his source. Quite certainly he had never heard of any connection between his bleeding spear and the lance of Longinus which pierced Christ's side, and according to ecclesiastical fable was preserved among the sacred relics of the crucifixion.

Wolfram applies to his lance the epithet "poisonous,"³ which is antagonistic, not only to any Christian explanation, but even to his manifest desire to ascribe to the object a healing force. The lance has a reed-like shaft.⁴ Wolfram, apparently, tries to explain the blood upon it by relating how

¹ *Echtra Nerai*, *Rev. Celt.*, x. 217-219, §§ 6-8, and compare LL, 215^a referred to by Kuno Meyer, *Cath Finntraga*, p. xii (*Anec. Oxon.*, Med. and Mod. Series, I, part 4). Meyer points out that in the greater part of Irish Literature the Tuatha Dá Danaan and the *aēs side* ("fairies"), are substantially identical.

² Cf. ed. Martin, 489, 24 ff.

³ "Mit einem gelüpten sper" 479, 8.

Parzival, ed. Martin, I, 169.

⁴ "in de wunden greif eins arztes hant, 480, 5
unz er des spers īsen vant :
der trunzān was rērfn,
ein teil in der wunden sīn :
diu gewan der arzet beidiu wider."

it is plunged into the king's wound at times to still the pain.¹ The king was so wounded by the lance long ago in a just against a pagan who thought to win the grail.² Wolfram tells us that the wound was in reality a punishment upon the grail king for having sought forbidden love.³

Any careful reader of these accounts will, I think, be convinced that the lance story as known to Chrétien and Wolfram must have been essentially pagan, and could scarcely have had more than a suggestion of Christian coloring.

II.

It is well to recall at this point that neither Chrétien nor Wolfram surrounds any portion of the scene at the Grail Castle with unmistakably religious associations, nor can we be sure that either one knew of an identification of the grail with any Christian cup. The importance which, in the scene at the Grail Castle, Chrétien attaches to the lance,

¹ "dô der sterne Sâturnus 489, 24
 wider an sîn zil gestuont,
 daz wart uns bî der wunden kuont,
 unt bî dem sumerlichen snê.
 im getet der frost nie sô wê,
 dem süezen œheime dîn,
 daz sper muos in die wunden sîn :
 Da half ein nôt für d'andern nôt : 490, 1
 des wart daz sper bluotec rôt."

Cf. 492, 25 ff.

² " eins tages der künec al eine reit 479, 3
 . . . úz durch àventiure,
 durch freude an minnen stiure
 des twanc in der minnen ger."

³ "swelch grâles hêrre ab minne gert 478, 13
 anders dan diu schrift in wert,
 der muoz es kommen ze arbeit
 und in siufzebäriu herzeleit."

mentioning it first, and devoting more space to it than to the grail, seems a hint that he was not following an essentially Christian legend. In any procession borrowed from the Mass the grail would inevitably outshadow the lance.

Moreover Chrétien does not call the object “the holy grail” or even “the grail,” but only “a grail” (by which he evidently expected his readers to understand “a dish”). After describing a marvellous sword which is sent by the niece of the fisher king, and is given by him to Perceval as adjudged and destined for him,¹ Chrétien’s account runs:—

“Uns varlés d’une cambre vint, 4369
Qui une blance lance² tint,

¹ This sword of the grail castle must be identical in origin with the sword “as estranges renges,” concerning which much is said in the *Queste*, the *Huth Merlin*, etc. (Such is also the conclusion of Miss Weston, *Sir Perceval*, II, 263; and of Professor Nitze, in these *Publications*, xxiv, 408-9). The passage in which Chrétien mentions this sword is peculiar:

“Tantost li sire en ravesti 4336
Celui ki laiens ert estranges,
De ceste espée par les ranges
Qui valoient ·I· grant trésor.”

Ed. Potvin, II, 145.

Could it be that the phrase “estranges renges” stood in the original that Chrétien was following, and suggested the rhyme word “estranges” of verse 4337? If so, Chrétien preferred to keep the grail sword apart from the sword “as estranges renges,” making the latter an object of Gawain’s quest at Montesclaire, *Perceval*, vv. 6090 ff.

²The whiteness of the lance, dwelt on by Chrétien here, connects the object with the fairy weapons of the Celts. See p. 32 below. Compare v. 4370 with v. 4375, and with vv. 6035-6:

“Por coi cele gote de sanc 6035
Saut par la pointe *del fer blanc.*”

Ed. Potvin, II, 202.

In Wauchier’s account of the Grail Castle most of the mss. speak of the whiteness of the lance. Ms. Montpellier (Potvin, III, 369-70) reads: “une blanche lance réonde,” v. 8; and “la blanche lance . . . dont la pointe saine,” vv. 72-3. Ms. Bib. Nat. 12576, translated by Miss Weston, *Sir Gawain at the Grail Castle*, p. 22, says: “a lance the blade of which was white as snow.”

Enpoingnie par emmi leu ;
Si passa par entre le feu
Et cil ki sor le lit séoient,
Et tout cil ki laiens estoient
Virent la lance et *le fer blanc* :
S'n ist une goute de sanc
Del fer de la lance el somet,
Et, jusqu'à la main au varlet,
Couloit cele goute vermelle.”

4379

After this came two lads who carried lighted candles;
Then:—

<p>“Un graal entre ses . II . mains Une damoisière tenoit Qui avoec les varlés venoit, Bièle, gente et acesmée ; Quant ele fu laiens entrée Atout le graal qu’ele tint Uné si grans clartés i vint Que si pierdirent les candoiles Lor clarté, com font les estoiles Quant li solaus liève ou la lune ; Apriès içou en revient une Qui tint le tailléoir d’argent ;¹ Içou vos di veraiment De fin or esmerée estoit ;</p>	4400
<p>Et li varlés les vit passer Et n’osa mie demander Del graal qui on en servoit.”</p>	4421
<p>• • •</p>	

Ed. Potvin, II, 146-8.

Chrétien could not have thought of connecting this procession with any part of the ritual of the Mass. Had he done so he would not have put the grail into the hands of a lovely young maiden but of a priest or acolyte. He doubtless regarded the procession as a part of the magnificence with which a great lord was served at meals in the twelfth century, a magnificence striking to the young Perceval.

¹ This is evidently the correct reading. Cf. vv. 4743 ff.

It is true that at a later point in the romance, where Perceval confesses to his uncle the hermit, and is blamed for not having asked concerning lance and grail, the hermit tells Perceval that the father of “*le roi Pesceour*” is fed by an “oiste” brought to him in the grail which he calls a “sainte cose” :

“ D’une sole oiste li sains hom	7796
Quant en ce Gréal li aporte	
Sa vie sostient et conforte	
Tant sainte cose est li Graus	
Et cil est si esperitaus	7800
K’â sa vie plus ne covient	
Que l’oiste qui el Gréal vient.”	

Ed. Potvin, II, 260-61.

At first glance, to one who knows the later grail stories, the word “oiste” seems to imply identification with the Mass. A more careful consideration will, however, scarcely allow one to think this. The hermit explains that the king’s father was sustained by a single wafer because he was so holy a man, and, presumably, so practised in abstinence. He does not make clear that it was because of any religious character of the grail. “Sainte” may imply only that the grail was a mysterious thing.

Chrétien is certainly alluding here to some legend, but perhaps, as Martin has suggested,¹ to a legend like that about Pachomius, of a saint who was miraculously sustained on a wafer a day, and not to the consecrated wafer. The latter meaning for “oiste” seems excluded; for to the twelfth century, Chrétien would have been guilty of gross sacrilege if he had represented the consecrated wafer² as

¹ *Parzival*, II, liv.

² Cf. Baist, *op. cit.*, p. 17: “Die Hostie, welche von der Graljungfrau dem alten König zur Nahrung gebracht wird, kann nicht konsekriert sein, das wäre eine undenkbare Häresie, sie ist einfach jenes Nachtischgebäck, das man in Deutschland und Frankreich auch Oblate nennt.”

carried in procession in a secular hall by a beautiful maiden. The whole account reads as if an association between the grail and a Christian cup were only dimly, or not at all present to the mind of Chrétien, and as if he were following a pagan story which had been very slightly touched by some monkish hand.

The way in which Wolfram handles the story is very difficult of explanation if the grail were already Christianized. Wolfram at no time identifies his grail with any Christian cup, although in accordance with his tendencies he throws some religious associations round it. According to him the grail is a precious stone¹ that furnishes every member of the company with the food that he most desires.² The stone receives this power from a host or wafer that every year on Good Friday a white dove lays upon it.³ The sight of the grail protects a man from death for a week and keeps him from growing older.⁴ Youths and maidens

¹ *Parzival*, ed. Martin, 233, 16 ff., 1, 82.

² 238, 3 ff.

³

“ Ez ist hiute der karfrītac,
daz man für wār dā warten mac,
ein tūb von himel swinget:
ūf den stein diu bringet
ein kleine wīze oblāt.
ūf dem steine si die lāt:
diu tūbe ist durchliuhtec blanc,
ze himel tuot si widerwanc.
immer alle karfrītage
bringet se ūf den, als i'u sage,
dā von der stein enpfāhet
swaz guots ūf erden drāhet
von trinken unt von spīse,
als den wunsch von pardise.”

470, 1

470, 10

⁴ These life-giving powers of the Grail are mentioned in an earlier passage, and are not, like the food-giving properties, said to be due to the “oblāt” brought by the dove. May not this omission be a hint that the story about the dove was a late explanation loosely attached to the account of the marvellous stone?

are summoned to the service of the grail by writings which miraculously appear and disappear from time to time upon the stone.¹ It was tended of old time by the neutral angels who took no part in the conflict when Lucifer fell.²

III.

It makes no difference whether Chrétien and Kyot (Wolfram's source) are the oldest grail romances, or whether Robert de Borron's *Joseph* or some other romance which interprets the grail procession in a Christian sense was written down a few years earlier.³ In any case one who affirms a Christian origin for the grail story finds it difficult to explain how the story got into such an unchristian and mythological form as in Chrétien and Wolfram. Certainly neither of these writers would have paganized a Christian tale. Even Chrétien, superficial and conventional as he is in matters of religion, would surely not have moved away from ecclesiasticism. On a hypothesis of Christian origin somebody must have paganized the grail story before it reached

¹ 470, 21 ff.

² 471, 15 ff.

“ di newederhalb gestuonden,	471, 15
dō striten beguonden	
Lucifer unt Trinitas,	
swaz der selben engel was,	
die edelen unt die werden	
muosen ūf die erden	471, 20
zuo dem selben steine.”	

As Martin has observed *op. cit.*, II, lvi, the neutral angels may well be a Christian substitution for the Tuatha Dá Danaan in whose possession, according to the Irish, were the talismans of plenty. According to LU, 16^b, the Tuatha were regarded as of the number of exiles driven out of heaven when Lucifer fell.

³ Cf. the view of Suchier and Birch-Hirschfeld, *Gesch. der franz. Lit.*, pp. 146-7, (1900). (But no romance in its extant form could well be earlier.)

Chrétien and Wolfram. Somebody must have taken the most sacred legend of the church and adapted it to the purposes of secular entertainment.

It is hardly credible that this should have happened in the eleventh or twelfth century in western Europe. The current of change was all the other way. It is unnecessary to enumerate heathen superstitions and tales of wonder that in the age of the crusades took on a Christian meaning. One striking example shows the way that growth took place. Zimmer has studied in detail the development during these ages of the heathen Celtic *Imram Mailduin* into the Christian "Legend of St. Brandan."¹

The development of the grail story, so far as we can trace it from Chrétien to the latest prose romance, is steadily in the direction of increased ecclesiasticism. The worldly Perceval gives place to the saintly Galahad. General probability would indicate that this must have been the direction of growth from the moment that the grail story assumed the slightest connection with Christian legend.

That the lance of Longinus discovered at Antioch in the first crusade, about 1097,² could have given rise by any

¹ *Haupt's Zt.*, xxxiii, 148 ff. But Willy Staerk, *Ueber den Ursprung der Grallegende*, 1903, thinks that development might have taken place in the opposite direction, and instances the, not-to-my-thinking significant, parallel, of the supposed growth of the Yggdrasil myth from the Christian Tree legend.

² This was supposed to be a rediscovery of an older relic at Jerusalem. On the older relic see *Itinera Hierosolymitana* (ed. Tobler and Molinier, I, 57), quoting from a *Breviarius de Hierosolyma* (dating about 530): "Et est in medio civitatis basilica illa (of Constantine), ubi est lancea, unde percussus est Dominus, et de ipsa facta est crux, et lucet in nocte, sicut sol in virtute diei." Cf. also Tobler and Mol., I, 65, 103, 126, 153, 217; and, for an early mention of Longinus in connection with the lance, the Anglo-Saxon charm "Wið gestice," Cockayne, *Leechdoms*, I, 393. (The above references I owe to the courtesy of Professor W. H. Hulme). The Longinus legend, because of its appearance in the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, c. 7, must

conceivable development to the bleeding lance of Chrétien and Wolfram is exceedingly improbable. Whether one starts from the Joseph of Arimathea legend or from some fragment of the Byzantine Mass, the difficulty is enormous. Nobody would have ventured to paganize the Mass. One might have assimilated a heathen formula or ritual to the Christian service.¹ A popular, originally heathen and doubtless Celtic tale has become partially Christianized and is gradually almost wholly ecclesiasticized.

Moreover if the grail and spear be of Christian origin, it is hard to understand why they are so universally associated with King Arthur. Were only a portion of the grail stories Arthurian, this might be explained as due to the great popularity of Arthur, which drew all stories, even those of Oriental origin, into his circle. But that every grail story without exception should be Arthurized seems impossible to explain unless the grail was in origin Celtic and came to light along with King Arthur.

There is scarcely a circumstance that makes it easy to derive the bleeding lance of the grail castle from the spear of Longinus, while many things point to a source in pagan and Celtic story. If the scene at the grail castle were taken from the Byzantine Mass, as Professor Golther suggests,²

have been known at an early period in England (Hulme, *Middle-English Gospel of Nicodemus*, p. lxix, E. E. T. S., ex. ser., No. 100). But the lance of Longinus never bled, nor had any particular resemblance to the spear of the Grail Castle. C. Kröner, *Die Longinuslegende, ihre Entstehung und Ausbreitung in der französischen Literatur*, a Münster dissertation, 1899, I have not seen. According to Freymond in Vollmöller's *Jahresbericht*, VIII, 2, 269, it is useless for students of the grail legend.

¹ Even in the most Christian forms of the story, the grail ceremony is never identified with the actual celebration of the mass; Heinzel, *op. cit.*, 179.

² *Parzival und der Gral, in deutscher Sage des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, Munich, 1908 (*Walhalla*, iv). Cf. K. Burdach, *Literaturzeitung* (1903) 2821-4; 3050-8; *Archiv*. 108, 131. Burdach's book on lance and grail

how could Chrétien have paganized the lance and grail as he did, and how could Wolfram have thought that the grail was a stone? Clearly, the story starts pagan and the Christianization is late and gradual. The venomous and destructive powers of the lance are surely important. They are antagonistic to the Longinus legend, but in conformity with pagan myth.

IV.

Wauchier,¹ the first continuator of the fragmentary *Perceval*, is interesting to our study because he lacked the constructive ability of Chrétien, and allowed whole sections of his source, which must have been nearly or quite pagan, to remain unaltered, side by side with his later Christian explanations. Wauchier tells us that the lance is the relic of the Crucifixion :

“ C'est la lance demainement 20259
 Dont li fuis Diu fu voirement
 Férus très parmi le costé.”

Ed. Potvin, iv, 4.

But his description of the lance is more barbaric than Chrétien's, and can surely find no parallel or possible source in any apocryphal gospel or ecclesiastical legend :

“ Et puis si vit, en .I. hanstier, 20151
 Une lance forment sainier
 Dedens une cope d'argent,
 En cel vassiel fu droitment,
 Toute fu sanglente environ,
 Li sans courroit à grand randon
 Del fier jusques à l'arestuel ;

announced in *Literaturzeitung* (1903) 2822, has not yet, to my knowledge, appeared. L. E. Iselin, *Der morgenländische Ursprung der Grallegende*, Halle, 1909, I have not been able to procure.

¹Cf. Paul Meyer, *Romania*, xxxii, 583.

Par foi, mentir ne vos en voel,
 En cel vassiel d'argent caoit,
 Par .I. tuiel d'or en issoit¹ 20160
 Puis ceurt parmi .I. calemel
 D'argent, jà mais ne verez tel,
 De la merveille s'esbahit.”

Ed. Potvin, iv, 1.

According to Wauchier the “rich grail” of itself supplied the assembled company with food,² much as in Wolfram’s *Parzival*. Gawain is the hero of this adventure. He asked concerning the meaning of the lance and sword but fell asleep before he had time to inquire concerning the grail. Wauchier ascribes the Enchantment of Britain, not to a blow of the spear, as in Chrétien, but to a stroke of the sword :³

“ Li roiaumes de Logres fu 20288
 Destruis et toute la contrée
 Par le cop que fist ceste espée.”

Ed. Potvin, iv, 5.

The account of the Grail Castle in *Diu Crône*⁴ of Heinrich von dem Türlîn possesses, though to a less degree, the same interest as that of Wauchier. Heinrich seems to have imperfectly digested and arranged his pagan materials to fit his Christian interpretation. At Gawain’s first visit the

¹ To this should be compared the following lines of the “Elucidation” :

“ Et li russiaus de sanc couroit 273
 D'un orcuel où la lance estoit,
 Par le rice tuiel d'argent.”

Ed. Potvin, ii, 10.

² Vv. 20114-20132.

³ The truth perhaps is that the enchantment was caused both by the blow of the sword that killed the grail king’s brother, and by the stroke of the spear that left the grail king himself wounded. See the dolorous stroke of a spear in Malory’s *Morte Darthur*, Bk. ii (discussed in Chap. ix below) and that of a sword, Malory, Bk. xvii, Chap. 3.

⁴ Written about 1220, ed. J. H. C. Scholl, *Stuttgart Litt. Verein*, Vol. 27, (1852).

grail is a “vaz” of crystal containing blood.¹ In it is a golden “rære” through which the aged grail king partook of the blood.² At Gawain’s second visit we are told that the grail was a stone.³ In these phrases we seem to have a glimpse of a more archaic account: of a description of the grail which we may suppose stood in Chrétien’s original, from which he concluded that it was a dish; but Kyot (Wolfram) took it to be a stone.

Heinrich explains the fresh blood in the grail of which the king partook as coming from the lance which is held over it.⁴ Like Wauchier, Heinrich mentions the mysterious sleep that overcame the visitors at the Grail Castle.⁵ He attributes the condition of the king and his land to the strife of kinsmen.⁶

¹*Diu Crône*, vv. 14,756 ff. :

“Diu truoc vor ir ein schœnez vaz
Von einer cristalle,
Daz was vol mit alle
Vil gar vrisches bluotes;
Rôtes goldes unde guotes
Dar inne ein schœne rære lac.”

² Vv. 14,776 ff.

³ “Gestein was ez und goldes rich; vv. 29,384-5
Einer kessen was ez glîch.”

⁴ “Do geschach ein michel wunder v. 29,416
Vor Gâweines ougen:
Daz sper von gotes tougen
Wart grôzer tropfen bluotes drâ
In dem tobliere, der im bî 29,420
Stuont: die nam der alt dar abe.”

⁵ See p. 15 above. The fairy music of the Tuatha Dá Danaan, which could induce sleep, is described in the ancient Irish sagas. See above p. 4, and compare the *Serglige Conculaind*, § 8, Windisch, *Irische Texte*, I, 207, from LU.

⁶ “Wan disiu jâmers nôt geschach, vv. 29,497 ff.
Von sînem vettern den er stach
Sin bruoder, durch sîn eigen lant.”

The romances so far quoted are among the earliest in date, and are those which seem to give the grail castle story most nearly in its primitive form. It will be observed that all of the internal evidence which they furnish points to a heathen source for the bleeding lance. The Christian explanation seems a mere label attached to some strange barbaric weapon. *A priori* considerations favor a source in pagan, presumably Celtic, mythology and legend.

None of the properties of the poisonous, extravagantly destructive, bleeding lance of the grail castle, not even bleeding, are matched by the lance of Longinus. No pseudo-gospel or legend of the time before Chrétien mentions bleeding among the miraculous attributes of the Christian lance. Some of the later grail romances, indeed, by explaining that the lance of Longinus bled no more after the time of Joseph of Arimathea,¹ indicate that bleeding was not in accordance with the tradition generally current concerning the relic of the Crucifixion. The venomous and destructive powers of the spear of the grail castle are altogether antagonistic to the Longinus legend, but in conformity with pagan story. In Celtic literature, then, we should seek for the source of the Bleeding Lance.

V.

No well known bleeding lance is of course to be found in ancient Welsh or Irish literature, else a Celtic source for the grail lance would probably never have been questioned. In the oldest Irish sagas, however, occurs a marvellous spear which possessed all the venomous and destructive powers of the lance of the grail castle; and although this Irish spear is not said to bleed, it is described as held point

¹ Hucher, *Grand Saint Graal*, II, 311.

downward over a caldron of blood into which it is ever and anon plunged—a circumstance that might develop into the idea of a lance bleeding into a vessel, as in Wauchier's and Heinrich's accounts. It is clear that a careful study of this Irish lance, and associated objects, is demanded.

This lance is widely known in ancient Irish story as the *LUIN* of Celtechar. A description of it under this name appears in the *Bruden Dá Derga* or "Destruction of Dá Derga's Brugh" or "Palace," one of the most ancient of Irish tales, which has been printed and translated by Stokes in the *Revue Celtique*, vol. xxii.¹ The description runs in question-and-answer style. A person called Ingcéél tells what he has seen. Another person Fer-rogain explains the names and the character of what Ingcéél saw. Ingcéél said :

§ 128. "I beheld the room that is next to Conaire. Three chief champions in their first greyness are therein. . . . A great lance in the hand of the midmost man, with fifty rivets through it. The shaft therein is a good load for the yoke of a plough-team. The midmost man brandishes that lance so that its edge-studs hardly stay therein, and he strikes the shaft thrice against his palm. There is a great boiler in front of them, as big as a calf's caldron, wherein is a black and horrible liquid. Moreover he plunges the lance into that black fluid. If its quenching be delayed it flames on its shaft and then thou wouldest suppose that there is a fiery dragon in the top of the house."

In reply Fer-rogain explained the scene thus :

§ 129. "Three heroes (they are) who are best at grasping weapons in Erin, namely, Sencha the beautiful son of Ailill, and Dubthach Chafer of Ulaid, and Goibnenn son of Lurgnech. And the *LUIN* of Celtechar son of Uthider, which was found in the battle of Mag Tured,² this is in the hand

¹ I quote from Stokes's translation, pp. 299-302. The text is from LU. On the age of the *Bruden Dá Derga*, cf. Zimmer, *Kuhn's Zt.*, xxviii, 554-585, and *Haupt's Zt.*, xxxv, 13.

² The *LUIN* is evidently identical with the venomous spear of Pezar, "king of Persia," which Lugh obtained in anticipation of the Second Battle of Mag Tured. The name of this spear was Slaughterer, and its

of Dubthach. . . That feat is usual for it when it is ripe to pour forth a foeman's blood. A caldron full of poison is needed to quench it when a deed of manslaying is expected. Unless this come to the lance, it flames on its haft, and will go through its bearer or the master of the palace wherein it is. If it be a blow that is to be given thereby it will kill a man at every blow, when it is at thatfeat from one hour to another, though it may not reach him. And if it be a cast, it will kill nine men at every cast, and one of the nine will be a king or crown prince or chieftain of the reavers. I swear what my tribe swears, there will be a multitude unto whom tonight the LUIN of Celtehar will deal drinks of death in front of the Brugh."

The statement in this story that the LUIN was found in the Battle of Mag Tured amounts to saying that it was a fairy spear. The Battle of Mag Tured was fought against the Tuatha Dá Danaan, from whom this weapon evidently came. Moreover the Brugh of Dá Derga is a marvellous abode, which seems to be confused with, or at least to have borrowed some of the attributes of the fairy castle. King Conaire on the road to the *Bruden* fell in with a monstrous woodman who had but one hand, one eye and one foot.¹ This giant herdsman, sometimes called the *Fáchan*, is, as I have pointed out in a previous article,² regularly encountered by the visitor to the Otherworld Castle. He tells Conaire that his coming has been long foretold,³ another commonplace of the Otherworld journey. The three reds wearing red mantles and all red even to their teeth who likewise preceded Conaire into the *Bruden* are from the fairy mounds and ride the horses of the *sídh*. They correspond to the mysterious warrior in red generally encountered at the entrance to the Other World.⁴

blazing point had to be kept in a great caldron of water. It is also called "the red spear." See "The Fate of the Children of Tuirenn," translated in Joyce, *Old Celtic Romances* (from a ms. of about 1416), pp. 59, 71-4, 80.

¹ § 38 of the *Bruden Dá Derga*, *Rev. Celt.*, xxii, 41-2.

² Vol. xx of these *Publications*, pp. 682-5.

³ § 39, p. 42. Cf. the *Imram Maileduin*, § 17, *Rev. Celt.*, ix, 490, from LU.

⁴ See these *Publications*, xx, 678. The passages from the *Bruden Dá Derga* relating to the three reds are so curious that the main portions may

The six cupbearers of the Brugh are also from the *sídh*.¹ Da the Red (Dá Derga), who built the Brugh, and "whose

be conveniently quoted : § 30. "Conaire marked before him three horse-men... Three red frocks had they, and three red mantles; three red bucklers they bore, and three red spears were in their hands; three red steeds they bestrode, and three red heads of hair were on them. Red were they all, both body and hair and raiment, both steeds and men." In § 31 Conaire bids his son overtake the three. § 32 "He goes after them, lashing his horse, and overtook them not. There was the length of a spear-cast between them : but they did not gain upon him and he did not gain upon them. . . He overtook them not but one of the three men sang a lay to him over his shoulder." [In the *Mabinogi* of Pwyll is a striking parallel from the Welsh. Pwyll is likewise unable to overtake a fairy lady though well mounted, and she speaks to him from her position in advance. Rhŷs, *Red Book*, I, 8-10; Loth, *Les Mab.*, I, 42]. § 35 [One of the three reds said] "Weary are the steeds we ride. We ride the steeds of Donn Tetsorach from the elf mounds [*a sídid*]. Though we are alive we are dead." § 134 "Red were they all together with their teeth. . . Three champions who wrought falsehood in the elf mounds. This is the punishment inflicted upon them by the king of the elf mounds to be destroyed thrice by the king of Tara. Conaire is the last king by whom they are destroyed. . . But they will not be slain." [Compare my conjecture that the red guardian of the Other World is not really slain, *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, VIII, 98-9].

The ancient Irish regarded the Tuatha Dá Danaan as able to appear in red. The Dagda is called in *Cormac's Glossary*, p. 144, "rúad rofessa," "red man of all knowledge." Windisch to be sure assumes, probably wrongly, another word "ruad" and translates "lord of great knowledge" (see his vocabulary, *Irische Texte, sub voc.*). A gloss in *Harl.* 5280, f. 69b, tells us that a red color used to be on Lugh from sunset to morning : "dath derc nobid fair o fuine gréni co matain," Stokes, *Rev. Celt.*, XII, 127. Bobd Dearg ("B. the Red") is another well known prince of the Tuatha Dá Danaan. In recently collected Irish folk-tales the magician in charge of the talismans of food and defence is often red. For example in Curtin's *Myths and Folk-Lore of Ireland*, p. 66, appears a "Red Haired Man," who owns the Sword of Sharpness, the Table-Cloth of Plenty, and the Cloak of Darkness. In the *Cóir Anmann*, in *H.*, 3, 18, a ms. written about 1500, Roch (Mother of Fergus) is said to be daughter of Ruad ("Red"), son of *Derg Dath-fola* (Red-Blood-Hued) from the elf mounds (*a sídhaibh*), ed. Stokes, *Irische Texte*, III, 2, 407. Another ms. of the same date calls the wife of Gobbán the smith, "Rúadsech the Red," *Rev. Celt.*, xxvii, 285.

¹ § 108, p. 284.

caldron has never been taken from the fire, but has been boiling food for the men of Erin," and who "supplies attendance of every room in the house with ale and food," is a sufficiently marvellous personage.¹ Probably his ever serving caldron belongs with the shield and sword of Mac-Cecht,² and the LUIN of Celtchar, likewise seen in the Brugh, and is an equally marvellous object.

It makes no difference, however, whether we regard the Brugh of Dá Derga as a fairy abode or not, in any case it is clear that the LUIN is depicted as a fairy spear. One of the three champions that held the LUIN is Góibniu, the Celtic Vulcan, the smith of the Tuatha Dá Danaan. Doubtless he was regarded as the maker of the LUIN. According to *Cormac's Glossary*, Góibniu³ made a fiery spear at the Battle of Moytura. In the text called the "Second Battle of Moytura," Góibniu is represented as supplying the Tuatha Dá Danaan during the battle with constant relays of fresh lances.⁴ "No point which his hand forged made a missing cast. No skin which it pierced tasted life afterwards." He was wounded by one of his own spears, but slew his antagonist therewith, and made himself whole by a magic bath.

If the reader, while he has freshly in mind the wild barbaric exaggeration of this description of the LUIN will turn back to the account of the bleeding lance in the Wauchier section of the *Perceval*, he will detect, I think, traces of the same half-grotesque Celtic fancy. The Irish lance held vertically over a caldron of blood is in much the same position as the lance of Wauchier. The LUIN like the lance of Wolfram is a poisonous weapon.

¹ §§ 132, 133, pp. 306-7.

² § 87, pp. 187-8.

³ Ed. O'Donovan (1868), p. 123. "Góibniu made a pole that burned those that he touched with it."

⁴ Ed. Stokes, *Rev. Celt.*, xii, 89-95.

Another account of the LUIN of Celtchar is in the story called *Mesca Ulad* (the Intoxication of the Ultonians). This saga, again, is in question-and-answer style :¹

“‘I saw’ said Crom Deroil “a prodigious royal band. One man in front of it with coarse black hair. . . A large knightly spear to the height of his shoulder. When its spear-ardour seized it, he would deal a blow of the handle of the mighty spear upon his hand, when the full measure of a sack of fiery particles would burst over its side and edge, when its spear-ardour seized it. A blood-black caldron of horrid, noxious liquid before him, composed through sorcery of the blood of dogs, cats and Druids. And the head of the spear was plunged in that poisonous liquid when its spear-ardour came.”

“‘That is Dabthach the Chafer of Ulad’ said Curui. . . “The quick, deedful LUIN of Celtchar is in his hand, on loan, and a caldron of crimson blood is before it, for it would burn its handle or the man that is bearing it unless it was bathed in the caldron of noxious blood. And foretelling battle it is.”

Still another account of the LUIN of Celtchar is in the “Battle of Rosnaree,” a saga preserved only in less ancient MSS. :²

“Wonderful indeed were the attributes of that spear; for flood-great streams of fire used to burst out through its sides, and there were four hired soldiers before him with a brazen bright caldron between them filled with blood in which that venomous spear was dipped every hour to quench its venom.”³

The streams of fire that burst from the LUIN might suggest the lance of the grail quest which bleeds in streams. Compare, for instance, the description of the latter in *Peredur*:⁴

¹Quoted from Hennessy’s translation. Hennessy also prints the text from LL. R. I. A., *Todd Lect. Series*, I, 37-38.

²R. I. A., *Todd Lect. Series*, IV, 79. Quoted from Hogan’s translation. Hogan also prints the text from Egerton, 106, a ms. copied in 1715.

³So Wolfram describes the poison of the bleeding spear as hot :

“sît man daz gelüppe heiz 490, 13
an dem spers isen weiz,
die zit manz ûf die wunden leit.”

⁴Loth, *Les Mab.*, II, 59-60; Rhŷs and Evans, *Red Book*, I, 203.

"Two men enter the hall bearing a spear of mighty size with three streams of blood flowing from the point to the ground."

Perpetual bleeding is not mentioned in the above accounts among the marvellous properties of the LUIN, although if it were continually dipped in a caldron of blood it might well be described as "bloody." It seems to be identical with the marvellous spear of King Cormac, which was called the *Crimall* or "Bloody Spear."¹ Perhaps therefore bleeding was in Irish tradition an attribute of the LUIN.²

The ancient Irish indeed attributed almost every kind of miraculous and extraordinary property to their lances and swords. Their weapons expanded like a rainbow,³ or had demons in them, so that they executed slaughter by them-

¹ Hennesy makes the identification, *Mesca Ulad*, R. I. A. Todd Lecture Series, I, part 1, pp. xiv-xvi. O'Curry translates *Crimall*, "Bloody Spear," *MS. Materials*, p. 48. This meaning is confirmed by a passage in LL. 107a8, which gives the name of Cormac's wonderful shield, *Croda Cormaic*. Stokes translates this "Bloody (shield) of Cormac," see *Ériu*, iv, 29 and 35.

² Later Irish tales call the LUIN "a red spear." The description of the marvellous weapons brought to Finn in the *Cath Finntraga* (edited and translated by Kuno Meyer from a fifteenth century ms., *Anec. Ox., Med. and Mod. Series*, I, 4, 32) should be compared:

"There arose from them [the weapons] fiery flashes of lightning and most venomous bubbles, and the warriors could not endure looking at those weapons. . . . For the balls of fire they sent forth no dress or garment could resist them but they went through the bodies of the men next to them like most venomous arrows."

In the same tale, on pages 38-9, Caisel Clumach's flaming shield is described:

"A venomous shield with red flames which the smith of hell (*gabha ifrinn*) had wrought for him." Druimderg son of Dolor slew the owner of this shield with a venomous spear that had been in the possession of the Clanna Rudraige one after another, and *Croderg* ("the Red-Socketed") was its name.

³ *Táin Bo*, ed. Windisch, *Ir. Texte*, Extraband (1905), p. 872, lines 6020-23.

selves,¹ or testified against those who swore falsely by them;² or they could foretell a battle,³ or relate all the former exploits of the spear or sword.⁴ If bleeding were not often made prominent by the ancient Irish among the properties of their weapons, this may well have been because they were chiefly interested in other more exaggerated and more marvellous qualities. Had bleeding been made the main attribute of a lance in ancient Irish, we may be sure that it would have bled, like the lance of Wauchier, in so exaggerated a way that spout and conduit would be needed to carry off the blood.⁵

¹ Cf. Maelodrán's lance, K. Meyer, *An. Ox. Hibernica Minora*, p. 81.

² *Serglige Conculaind*, ed. Windisch, *Irische Texte*, I, 205–6 (from LU., 43a).

³ The “Caindel Chusraid” in the *Táin Bo*, ed. Windisch, *Irische Texte*, Extraband, line 5226, (from LL).

⁴ *The Second Battle of Moytura*, R. C., XII, 107, “Ogma the champion found Orna the sword of Tethra a king of the Fomorians. Ogma unsheathed the sword and cleansed it. Then the sword related whatsoever had been done by it; for it was the custom of swords at that time when unsheathed to set forth the deeds that had been done by them—demons used to speak from the weapons.”

⁵ Reasons exist for thinking that blazing and bleeding were more or less interchangeable attributes of a marvellous weapon. Wolfram speaks of the hot poison of the bleeding spear, p. 22 above. In the *Perlesvaux*, ed. Potvin, I, 74, the sword of John the Baptist which belongs to King Gurgalon bleeds every day at noon. In Hucher, *Grand St. Graal*, III, 217, the sword of Joseph of Arimathea bleeds. The sword among the “thirteen marvels of the Isle Britain” flamed from hilt to point, p. 27 below. In the *Perlesvaux*, ed. Potvin, I, pp. 15–16, ms. Berne, occurs a blazing spear that can be quenched only in blood:—

Arthur slew a black knight who carried a blazing spear: “Et si estoit li glaives anson gros près du fer et ardant à grosse flambe laide et hideuse, et descendoit la flambe dusque sor le poing del chevalier.” The spear was not extinguished except by the blood of King Arthur when he was wounded by it in the arm.

The unusual adjectives for a flame “laide et hideuse” recall the Irish LUIN, which had to be plunged into a “black and horrible liquid.” See p. 18 above.

The *Prose Lancelot* contains a version of the Grail Castle story in which

VI.

Attention has never been sufficiently called to the way in which all our oldest accounts of Arthur picture him as chiefly remarkable for the possession of marvellous objects,

is mentioned no bleeding lance, but its place appears taken by a blazing spear. The blazing spear is described immediately after the grail but is connected with the perilous couch on which Gawain was asked to lie. No sooner had he stretched himself upon the couch than "there came forth swiftly from a chamber a lance whereof the blade was all afire, and it smote Sir Gawain so hardly that despite shield and hauberk it pierced his shoulder" (Miss Weston's translation from ms. 123, Bib. Nat., *Sir Gawain at the Grail Castle*, p. 59). The blazing lance may have found its way here in connection with the "Lit Merveil," and have nothing to do with the grail talismans (cf. Chrétien's *Lancelot*, vv. 518-533). It is at least curious, however, that in this grail story no *bleeding* lance appears.

It is not improbable that the ancient Irish thought of the LUIN of Celtchar not only as blazing, but also as shedding poison in the shape of drops of blood. Celtchar's death came about through the agency of the LUIN. The text has been edited and translated by Kuno Meyer, from LL, 118^a, in R. I. A., *Todd Lect. Series*, xiv, 25-31 (cf. *Rev. Celt.*, xxiii, 335) :

"Celtchar slew with his LUIN his marvellous dog that had been a pest to all Ireland. As he held up the spear a drop of the dog's blood ran along the spear shaft and went through Celtchar so that he died."

It is possible to hold that Celtchar's death was due entirely to the venomous character of the hound's blood, but it seems more plausibly attributed to the poisonous agency of the LUIN.

The sword of Sivard in the Danish ballad sheds such poisonous drops (*Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, no. 3). Hagan has asked Sivard for his enchanted sword. Sivard replies: "My good sword Adelbring may you have, indeed, but keep you well from the tears of blood that are under the hilt, keep you from the tears of blood that are so red. If they run down upon your fingers it will be your death."

That the same weapon might be described at one moment as wrapped about with blazing fire, and the next moment as dripping with poisonous blood, the lay of Angantheow shows. The sword Tyrfing made by the dwarves had three curses upon it: it ever brought death to its bearer! No wound made by it could be healed; three deeds of dolour should be wrought by it. As it lay under Angantheow's head he declared "Tyrfing is all wrapped about with fire," *C. P. B.*, I, 166, but only 28 lines later as

and for his wonderful quests in search of such objects. This statement is true both of the scanty remains of Welsh literature and of the earliest Latin, French, and English chronicles.

Perhaps our best glimpse of what Arthur was like in the fancy of the Welsh, before their ideas were influenced by French Arthurian romance, is gained in the story of "Kulhwch and Olwen." "Kulhwch and Olwen" and "The Dream of Rhonobwy" are the only Arthurian tales in the *Red Book of Hergest* that show no traces of the influence of French and English romance. In "Kulhwch and Olwen" Arthur is altogether concerned with marvellous objects. Near the beginning of the tale he recounts the valuables in his possession, doubtless all of them marvellous: "My ship; and my mantle; and Caletvwch my sword; and Rongomyant my lance; and Gwyneb-gwrthuehr my shield, and Carnwenhan my dagger, and Gwenhwyvar my wife."¹ Elsewhere in this story the name of Arthur's ship "Prytwenn" is mentioned.² Moreover the entire action of the tale concerns itself with the quest by Arthur and his warriors of some sixteen or more marvellous objects. Two of these objects are connected with the boar Trwyth which must be hunted. Another is the sword of Gwrnach the giant.³ "The Twrch Trwyth will

he gave it to Hervor he said, "Keep it aye sheathed . . . touch not the edges, there is venom upon them, this doomer of men is worse than a plague," *C. P. B.*, I, 167. In the preceding lay it is called "the blood-grooved blade tempered in venom," *C. P. B.*, I, 161: "hvass blóð-refill herðr í eitri."

¹ Ed. Rhŷs and Evans, *Red Book of Hergest*, I, 105. The translation given is my own. Loth's version of the passage (*Les Mab.*, I, 200) seems to be defective; for, without any apparent reason, he omits the reference to Arthur's ship.

² Rhŷs, I, 132, 136-7; translation in Loth, I, 267, 272.

³ "Gwrnach gawr," Rhŷs, I, 125; Loth, I, 256. Nitze in these *Publications*, xxiv, 408, adopts Rhŷs's idea that the Garlan of the *Huth-Merlin*,

never be slain except therewith." Still another is the "Basket of Gwyddneu Garanhir":¹ "If the whole world should come together, thrice nine men at a time, the food that each of them desired would be found within it."² "The Dream of Rhonobwy" is less archaic in appearance than "Kulhwch and Olwen." It is not the story of a quest, but it too gives prominence to Arthur's marvellous belongings. It mentions the name of Arthur's mantle, and describes it. "Gwenn was the name of the mantle, and it was one of its properties that whoever was wrapped in it could see everyone without being seen by any."³ It also describes Arthur's sword which had two serpents graven on it; "and when the sword was drawn from its scabbard it seemed as if two flames of fire burst from the mouths of the

the Garlon of Malory, and the Welsh Gwrgi Garwlwyd, accused of cannibalism in the Triads (see Loth, *Les Mab.*, II, 288-9), are identical. Nitze further equates Gorlagon "werewolf" (see Kittredge, *Stud. and Notes*, VIII, 205), and King Gurgalon who in the *Perlesvaux* has possession of the sword of John the Baptist which bleeds at noon and (like *Caladbolg*, see below, p. 33) expands when drawn from its sheath. Gurgalon has cannibalistic traits. Gwrnach the giant, with his sword, evidently resembles Gurgalon even more closely. No stranger has ever left Gwrnach's castle alive (Loth, *Les Mab.*, I, 257), a fact that suggests him to be also a cannibal. Gwrnach's sword is perhaps identical with "Dyrnwyn" the sword of Rhydderch Hael, which is mentioned in an old ms. as one of the thirteen marvels of the isle Britain. "If any man drew it except its owner it burst into a flame from the handle to the point" (Jones, *Welsh Bards*, London, 1802, II, 47; cf. Lady Guest, *Mab.*, II, 354).

¹ Garanhir means "long crane," and Welsh legend assigned to him a marvellous fish weir. On Gwyddneu Garanhir, and his never failing basket, as a prototype of the Fisher King, see Nitze, these *Publications*, XXIV, 397-8.

² Ed. Rhŷs, I, 122; Loth, I, 244. The Basket of "Gwyddno" is one of the "thirteen marvels of the isle Britain." If food for one were put into it, food for a hundred might be taken out; Jones, *op. cit.*, II, 47.

³ Ed. Rhŷs, I, 152-3; Loth, I, 302. Arthur's Mantle, which made the wearer invisible, is also one of the "thirteen marvels of the Isle Britain," *op. cit.*

serpents, and then so wonderful was the sword that it was hard for anyone to look upon it.”¹

The poems of the Four Ancient Books of Wales contain, as is well known, only tantalizing glimpses of Arthur. A whole poem, however, “The Spoils of Annwn,” is devoted to the quest by Arthur and his warriors of a caldron and sword contained in the marvellous castle of the Other World.

The Spoils of Annwn which is in the *Book of Taliessin*, is archaic and obscure and is evidently uninfluenced by French romance. To reach Annwn, Arthur and his warriors sailed the ocean in his ship Prytwenn. The marvellous power of this ship to hold any number of men however great is alluded to,² and the castle of the Other World is described as “the city of the revolving wheel,”³ as “four times revolving,” and as “the Island of the Strong Door.” Here Arthur sought the “caldron of the monarch of Annwn.” . . . “A ridge about its edge and pearls. It will not boil the food of a coward”; and “a sword brightly gleaming.” “Except seven, none returned from Caer Sidi.”⁴

That the caldron would not boil the food of a coward is perhaps a crude way of expressing the idea that only the brave and pure in heart may see the grail. That few of Arthur’s knights returned alive from the grail quest is a commonplace of the romances.

From the few fragments of really ancient Welsh literature that exist it would seem as if Arthur’s chief claim to dis-

¹ Rhŷs and Evans, I, 152; Loth, I, 301.

² “Tri lloneit prytwen yd aeth gan Arthur.” See my note in *Studies and Notes*, VIII, 79. Manannán’s canoe “Wave-Sweeper” had this power; Joyce, *Old Celtic Romances*, p. 63, from a ms. of 1416.

³ “Caer Sidi”; see Rhŷs, *Art. Leg.*, p. 301.

⁴ Quoted from Skene, *Four Books*, I, 264-266; for the text see II, 181-2.

tinction was that he kept and obtained marvellous treasures prominent among which were a sword and other weapons, and a vessel of plenty.

Nor is the case at all different in the older chronicles. The earliest known mention of Arthur, that of the so-called Nennius, implicitly ascribes to him a marvellous shield and sword :

“The eighth [battle] at the fortress Guinnion, when Arthur bore the image of the Virgin Mary on his shoulders¹ and a great slaughter was made of the pagans ; . . . The twelfth on Mount Badon when Arthur alone in one day killed nine hundred and sixty men.”²

The statement that Arthur bore the image of the Virgin on his shoulders is paralleled by the next known reference to him, the entry in the *Annales Cambriae* :

“516. Battle of Badon, in which Arthur carried the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ for three days and three nights on his shoulders and the Britons were victors.”³

Professor R. H. Fletcher has, I think, demonstrated⁴ that this statement of Arthur’s having carried on his shoulders the image of the Virgin (or the cross), a statement of course resting on Welsh tradition, is due to a mistake between the Welsh words *ysgwydd*, “shield,” and *ysgwyd*, “shoulder.” Geoffrey of Monmouth in taking over this section of Nennius restores the sentence to what must have been its original form :

“[Arthur] fastened on his shoulders his shield Prydwen, on which was represented the image of the Holy Mary.”⁵

¹ *Super humeros suos.*

² Translated from the text of Mommsen, *Mon. Germ. Hist. Auct. Antiq.*, xiii ; *Chron. Min.*, iii, Cap. 56, pp. 199-200.

³ Ed. Phillimore, reprint by Loth, *Les Mab.*, ii, 347.

⁴ Arthurian Material in the Chronicles, *Studies and Notes*, x, 32-33.

⁵ Ed. San Marte, ix, 4, 17-19 (date about 1136). Fletcher thinks it possible that this reading may have stood in Geoffrey’s copy of Nennius.

The entry in Nennius, then, is an implied reference to Arthur's marvellous armor. In like manner we may be sure that Arthur's exploit of slaying nine hundred and sixty men was due to his possession of Caliburnus. Geoffrey, in the corresponding place, tells us that Arthur "slew four hundred and seventy men single-handed with his sword Caliburnus."¹

The *Mirabilia*² attached to "Nennius" ascribe to Arthur a marvellous dog, Cabal.³ They mention a stone which they say can still be seen, on which is the foot-print "made by Cabal, who was the dog of Arthur the warrior,⁴ when he hunted the boar Troynt." This is a reference to the most striking quest of "Kulhwch and Olwen," and verifies the early existence of at least the kernel of that tale.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, besides mentioning Arthur's shield Pridwen and his sword Caliburn in the passages just quoted, refers in three or four other places to Caliburn,⁵ calling it "the best of swords that was forged in the Island of Avalon." Although Geoffrey may not have understood this, his chronicle shows clearly that, like the Irish marvellous swords, Caliburn was drawn at the crucial moment in battle, and always brought victory. Geoffrey also mentions Arthur's lance Ron,⁶ "a tall lance and a stout, full meet to do slaughter withal."

Wace, besides repeating Geoffrey's list of arms, mentions Arthur's Round Table, "Dont Breton dient mainte fable."⁷

The English chronicler Laȝamon adds, to what is in

¹ ix, 4, 40-41.

² Chap. 73, ed. Mommsen, p. 217.

³ "Kavall" in *Kulhwch*, Loth, *Les Mab.*, i, 272, 6.

⁴ *Arthuri Militis*.

⁵ ix, 4, 20-21; ix, 11, 75; x, 11, 16-17 and 30-31.

⁶ ix, 4, 21-22.

⁷ *Le Roman de Brut*, ed. Le Roux de Lincy, ii, 74, v. 9999. Wace's date is 1155.

Geoffrey and Wace, a long account of the origin of the Round Table which indicates its marvellous properties. It would seat sixteen hundred men and more, and yet Arthur could carry it with him wherever he rode, and set it where he would.¹ Lazamon further adds that Arthur's burnie was named Wygar, and was the work of Witeȝe, an elfish smith; ² that his helmet was named Goswhit,³ and that his spear Ron was wrought in Caermarthen by a smith named Griffin.⁴

¹ Ed. Madden, II, 539-540, vv. 22,901 ff., (date about 1200).

² Vv. 21,129-34. Here I disregard Madden's version and follow the manifestly correct translation of Professor Kittredge. See p. 5, footnote 4, of my article in *Modern Philology*, I, 99. The text is :

MS. A

“pa dude he on his burne ;
Ibroide of stele.
þe makede on aluisc smið ;
Mid aðelen his crafte.
He wes ihatē Wygar ;
þe witeȝe wurhte.”

MS. B

“ And he warp on him ; 21,129
One brunie of stele.
þat makede an haluis smiþ ;
Mid his wise crafte.
He was i-hote Wigar ;
þe wittye wrohte.”

Of course Professor Kittredge emends “he” in v. 21,133 to “heo,” and “Witeȝe” is an easy corruption of *Widia*, the name in Anglo-Saxon of *Weland*'s son. *Weland*, the Germanic smith-god, is often in the romances connected with the magic weapons of Arthur and his knights. This has come to pass, I believe, by substitution of the better known smith for unfamiliar Celtic smiths and magicians. I agree with Nitze, therefore (these *Publications*, XXIV, 407, note 3), as opposed to Brugger (*Zt. f. franz. Spr. u. Lit.*, XXXI, rev. section 132) in thinking “Garlon” to be a more original form of the name of the magician in *Huth Merlin* than “Gallan,” and explain the latter form as due to confusion with *Weland* (Valland).

³ V. 21147.

⁴ Vv. 23,781-4. Perhaps Griffin is an English distortion of the Welsh *gofan*, “smith.” Imelmann (*Lazamon, Versuch über seine Quellen*, Berlin, 1906, pp. 31-33) has certainly not shown that Griffin may not be a corruption of *gofan*, although, as I indicated in my article referred to, the name Griffin is too common to dogmatize about. Proper names are often the least permanent portions of a plot or story, and their use in investigating the origins of the romances is fraught with danger, as Professor Nitze (*Modern Philology*, VII, 146-7, 161) has learned.

All the evidence that can be collected points to a conclusion that Arthur was chiefly interesting to the ancient Welsh and Bretons because of his ownership of superhuman weapons, and because of the quests undertaken by him and his warriors for other marvellous objects. Can anyone think it probable that the quest for the grail was a late and accidental addition to the story of such a hero — especially if one reflects that of the three or four extant fragments of ancient Welsh literature of any length dealing with Arthur,¹ two, *Kulhwch and Olwen*, and Taliessin's *Spoils of Annwn*, describe him with his warriors as searching (among other objects) for a vessel of plenty?

In the invention of marvellous objects suitable for quests the Welsh were extraordinarily prolific. No student of Celtic literature will feel it likely that the French redactors of the Arthur stories could easily have added anything to the marvellous objects already associated with King Arthur by the Welsh.

The marvellous objects belonging to Arthur or sought by him or his warriors, including the talismans of the grail castle, probably all belong together; and whatever their ultimate origin, have all passed through the crucible of Celtic fancy. They are all fairy objects, connected by the Celts with the supernatural race known both in Wales and Ireland, and called in the latter country the Tuatha Dá Danaan and the Sídhe. The whiteness or the glittering character of the objects was a sign of their fairy origin.

In a previous article I have pointed out that most of the marvellous belongings of Arthur have names in Welsh that imply luminosity or whiteness.² The whiteness of the

¹ None exist in ancient Breton or Cornish.

² *Mod. Phil.*, I, 101–111. *Pridwen* (the ship), means “white form”; *Wynebgyrthusher* (the shield), “night gainsayer”; *Carnwenhau* (the dagger), “white haft”; *Ehangwen* (the hall), “broad white”; *Gwenhwyfar*

Bleeding Lance, on which both Chrétien and Wauchier lay stress,¹ (as well as the dazzling brilliancy of the grail) is, therefore, significant and goes far by itself to prove that the talismans of the Grail Castle belong with the marvellous possessions of King Arthur, and have a like origin in Celtic legend.

VII.

It is now nearly twenty years since Professor Zimmer demonstrated the pan-Celtic character of Caliburn, Arthur's sword,² proving that it is practically identical with *Caladbolg*, the sword of Leite in Irish saga. Arthur's sword was naturally the first of Arthur's belongings to have its Celtic

(Arthur's wife), "white enchantress." Also *goswhit*, Laȝamon's name for Arthur's helmet (v. 21,147) is evidently a translation of a Welsh name meaning "goose white." [Imelmann's suggestion, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31, that *Goswhit* might come from a hypothetical Middle-Welsh **gospeit* "polished," may be disregarded as a last straw clutched at by one who is in dread of being forced to admit that the English of Laȝamon's day knew of Arthur, and may have had names for his marvellous arms. But Imelmann is right in saying that this one name did not justify my assumption that Laȝamon himself understood any Welsh].

To this I might add that the name of Arthur's mantle, *Gwenn*, referred to above, pp. 26-7, means "white," and that the arms of Manannán and of other chieftains of the Tuatha Dá Danaan were, in Irish story, white or luminous.

¹ See above, p. 7.

² *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1890, pp. 516-7. Besides the evident relation of name: in Malory *Excalibur*, in Geoffrey *Caliburnus*, in *Kulhwch and Olwen*, *Caledvwlch*, and in Irish *Caladbolg*; the swords agree in the possession of three remarkable qualities. Both are drawn at the decisive moment in battle and always bring victory. Both flash or glitter: the sword of Leite might expand into a rainbow (*Táin Bo*, ed. Windisch, lines 6022-23). Both came from fairy land: Caliburnus was made in the Isle of Avallon: the sword of Leite came out of a *sídh*, or fairy knoll ("Claideb Fergusa, claideb Leiti a sídib é," Windisch, *l. c.*, lines 6021-2). Windisch conjectures (*Táin Bo*, pp. 860 and 869, footnotes) that *Caladcholg* was perhaps an older form of the name than *Caladbolg*.

character pointed out. It is the best known of them all. Mentioned implicitly as we have seen in the first reference to Arthur, it is likely to be prominent in the last Arthurian tale ever penned. Wordsworth, with a poet's insight, caught the importance of this sword to Arthur's character in the well known lines :¹

“Of Arthur,—who to upper light restored
With that terrific sword
Which yet he brandishes for future war.”

No one has yet drawn with sufficient emphasis the obvious conclusion that if Arthur's sword be Celtic, all of the marvellous objects associated with him must be Celtic, and must have had their parallels in Irish saga. These marvellous objects all belong together, and come from Avallon (the Other World) or from Annwn (Hades). In like manner the marvellous weapons and other objects in Irish story seem to belong together and come from the *sídh* or from the Tuatha Dá Danaan. They are perhaps all, in Irish, developments of an original set of talismans attributed to this race of wizards and fairies.

The Tuatha Dá Danaan were, as Alfred Nutt has shown,² originally the gods of life and increase, and became gradually rationalized by the chroniclers into a supposed race of invaders, against whom the ancient inhabitants of Ireland were thought to have fought. They were pan-Celtic divinities recognized on both sides of the Irish channel. The four genuine Welsh Mabinogion are altogether concerned with tales of their doings. Both Irish and Welsh attributed marvellous treasures to this race. It is obvious, therefore, that the Irish and Welsh stories will have considerable parallelism, and that a study of the Irish talismans

¹ “Artegal and Elidure.”

² See the *Voyage of Bran*, vol. II.

of the Tuatha Dá Danaan will throw light on those of Welsh or Breton origin associated with King Arthur.

Keating, who was endeavoring to set forth ancient Irish legend under the guise of history, says that the Tuatha Dá Danaan came to Ireland from Greece. Before their coming they used to help the Athenians against the Syrians; “for they would put demons into the bodies [of the slain Athenians] to restore them to life.”¹ Keating relates that the Tuatha Dá Danaan brought with them to Ireland “four noble jewels,”² namely the Lia Fáil, or Stone of Destiny, the function of which was to announce the rightful king by roaring under him, the sword and spear of Lugh the long-handed, “the Cauldron of the Daghdha, a company would not go away unsatisfied from it.”³

It can hardly be a chance coincidence that the talismans of the Grail Castle are usually four: a sword, a spear, a plenty-giving grail, and a silver dish. Wolfram indeed introduces two knives, but he calls his grail a stone⁴ and thus comes very close, after all, to the Irish set of talismans.

It is probable that the magic powers of these talismans were somewhat vaguely believed to be almost boundless. The power of restoring the dead to life, attributed by Keating to the Tuatha Dá Danaan, doubtless resided in one of these talismans, perhaps in the plenty-giving caldron which may have been a caldron of regeneration as well.

¹ Keating's *History of Ireland*, edition and translation by D. Comyn, *Irish Texts Society*, iv, 203.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 205-6.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 209. On the Irish talismans cf. Nutt, *Voy. of Bran*, ii, 171, and his footnote in Miss Weston's *Leg. of Sir Perceval*, ii, 314-5. To Mr. Nutt belongs the credit of having brought a comparison between the Irish talismans and the treasures of the Grail Castle into prominence.

⁴ That Wolfram combined two objects in his grail, which is both a stone and a source of food, is perhaps indicated by the peculiar phrase which he employs: “der stein ist auch genant der grâl.” 469, 28.

Wolfram attributes a similar power to the grail, which, he says, protects those who behold it from death for a week, and prevents their growing older. In the Lia Fáil, or stone that cried out under the man who should be king, we have probably the original of Wolfram's grail as a precious stone which announced those who should be its rightful servants by the inscriptions that appeared from time to time upon it.

The antiquity of the tradition of the "Four Jewels" given by Keating cannot, I think, be doubted. The Stone of Destiny is referred to in a poem by Eochaid ua Flainn in the *Book of Leinster*,¹ and its properties, including its power of designating a king, are described in the *Baile in Scáil*,² a tract extant in a fifteenth century ms., but mentioned by Fland Manistrech, who died in 1056,³ and assignable on evidence of language to the tenth century.

Moreover the *Cath Maige Turedh* or "Second Battle of Moytura," which is in a fifteenth century ms., but which from the evidence of grammatical forms appears to go back to a far earlier period, contains detailed mention of these four talismans :

"The Stone of Fál which was in Tara. It used to roar under every king that would take Ireland. . . . The Spear that Lugh had. No battle was ever won against it or him who held it in his hand. . . . The Sword of Nuada. When it was drawn from its deadly sheath, no one ever escaped from it and it was irresistible. . . . The Dagdae's Caldron. No company ever went from it unthankful."⁴

¹ Nutt, *Voy. of Bran*, II, 171.

² Nutt, *Voy. of Bran*, I, 186-8.

³ See LL, 132a, lines 47-48; *Irische Texte*, III, 229, and Nutt, *op. cit.*, I, 189.

⁴ Edited and translated from ms. Harleian 5280 by W. Stokes in *Revue Celtique*, XII, 52-130 (1891). The Irish text of the above passage is: "An Lia Fail bui a Temraig. Nogesed fo cech rig nogebad Erinn. . . . An tsleg boi ac Lug. Ni gebtea cath fria no frisinti an bidh il-laimh. . . . Claidiub Nuadot. Ni terládh nech dei o dobirthe asa idntiuch bodhuha ocus ni gebtai fris. . . . Coiri an Dagdai. Ni tegedh dam dimdach uadh" (pp. 57-58).

Although the four jewels of the Tuatha Dá Danaan do not happen to be mentioned in the oldest Irish tales, nothing can be plainer than that all the oldest Celtic fairy tales agree in ascribing to their Other World marvellous objects and especially marvellous food. The crude fancy of early times often described the food as due to marvellous trees or animals. The name Avallon was explained by the Welsh as coming from *afal*, "apple," and the Irish called *Mag Mell* "Emain of the Apples." According to one of the oldest of Irish fairy tales, Connla subsisted for a month on a fairy apple.¹ In the *Serglige Conculaind*² not only are the marvellous trees described: "There are three score trees . . . three hundred men are nourished by each tree ;" but a plenty-giving vessel as well: "A cask there of joyous mead, a distributing to the household. It continues ever without wasting and is always full." The *Echtra Lóegaire* after mentioning food, drink and music, refer also to a marvellous sword:³ "I was master of a blue sword."

The usual thing in the Irish tales is to represent the Other World under the form of a palace containing a collection of marvellous objects. Like the Grail Castle this palace was very difficult to find, and was generally met with after sunset; like the fisher king its inhabitants had the power of shape-shifting,⁴ and of becoming invisible. As in the Grail Castle food was often served by invisible hands, and a mysterious drowsiness was wont to overcome the visitors. Like the Grail Castle it was apt to vanish over night.

Such a place was the Brugh or Mansion of the Dagda

¹ The *Echtra Condla*; Windisch, *Kurzgefasste Irische Grammatik*, pp. 118–120, prints the text from LU.

² *Irische Texte*, I, 197–227, from LU.

³ *Cours de litt. Celtique*, II, 361, from LL.

⁴ On the shape-shifting of the Fisher King see the "Elucidation," v. 222.

described in the *De Gabail int-Shídá* or “Conquest of the Sídh” from *LL*. It passed by a trick into the possession of Aengus who was thereafter known as “Aengus of the Brugh :”¹

“On y voit trois arbres auxquels pendent toujours des fruits ; on y voit deux cochons, l’un sur pied et toujours vivant, l’autre tout cuit, et par conséquent prêt à manger ; à côté est un vase qui contient une bière excellente ; là, enfin, personne ne mourut jamais.”

The Brugh of the Dagda is evidently only a special form of the abode of the Tuatha Dá Danaan as described in the “Legend of Eithne”² in the *Book of Fermoy*, a fifteenth century ms. Manannán, we are told, settled the Tuatha Dá Danaan in the most beautiful valleys, drawing round them an invisible wall impenetrable to the eyes of men and impassable. He also supplied them with the ale of Góibniu the Smith, which preserved them from old age and death, and gave them for food his own swine, which, although killed and eaten one day, were alive again and fit for eating the next, and so would continue forever.

In the *Siaburcharpat Conculaind* in LU,³ we are told how Cuchulinn voyaged to the land of *Scath* (“shadow”), and, after escaping terrible dangers, carried off three marvellous cows and a caldron of plenty. According to what seems to be another form of the same story,⁴ Cuchulinn slew Curoi, the lord of a revolving castle, and carried off his cows and his caldron.

In these ancient tales of cows, pigs, and caldrons we get the peasant notion of the plenty of the Other World. The

¹ Quoted from the summary by d’Arbois de Jubainville, *Cours*, II, 270 ff. The text is in *LL*, 245b, 41–246a, 14.

² From Todd’s summary, *R. I. A.*, *Irish MS. Series*, I, I, 46.

³ Translated by O’Beirne Crowe, *Proceedings of Royal Hist. and Arch. Assoc. of Ireland*, fourth series, I, 387 (1871).

⁴ In *LL*, 169b, lines 42 ff. Printed by O’Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, II, 482, (translation at p. 530).

stories of the Grail Castle express the same conception in a more refined form. For the present research the significant point is that the marvellous objects seem to belong together as it were in a set. Thus O'Curry tells from LL¹ the story how St. Maedhog of Cluain-Mór brought four presents to Bran Dubh: a boiler made by Gressach the Smith, a flesh fork [these objects seem to supply food], the Sword of Crimthann who was never vanquished, the Shield of Enna which was all red with blood.

In the *Fate of the Children of Tuirenn*² are described the magic belongings of Manannán, the great chieftain of the Tuatha Dá Danaan:

“[Lugh] rode Manannán’s steed *Enbarr* “foam of the water.” No one was ever killed on this steed, for she travelled with equal ease on land and on sea. He wore Manannán’s coat of mail through which no one could be wounded. He had on Manannán’s breast-plate that no weapon could pierce and Manannán’s helmet *Cannbarr*, that glittered with dazzling brightness (p. 49). Manannán’s sword, *The Answerer*, hung at his side; no one ever recovered from its wound. Those opposed to it in battle had no more strength in looking at it than a woman in violent sickness.”

The treasures of Manannán, kept in a Crane-Bag, were thought to have passed into the possession of Cumhal, the father of Finn.³ After Cumhal’s death Finn slew his father’s murderer and recovered the Crane-Bag with its treasures: Manannán’s shirt, his knife, the belt of Góibniu, the shears of Alba, and the helmet of Lochlann.

Magic arms and armor are very often, in Irish saga, connected with Góibniu, the smith of the Tuatha Dá Danaan,

¹ *Manners and Cust.*, II, 338–9. Cf. Crimthann’s treasures, *Cours*, II, 364.

² Translated by Joyce, *Old Celtic Romances*, pp. 37 ff., from the *Book of Leccan*, compiled about 1416.

³ *Duanaire Finn*, *Irish Texts Soc.*, VII, text, pp. 21–2; translation pp. 118–9, ms. of 1627. Cf. *Magnímartha Finn*, *Rev. Celt.*, V; translation in *Ériu*, I, 180–5.

who was one of the three that held the LUIN. He made a fiery spear and was smith at the Battle of Moytura. His belt as well as his never failing pigs and ale have been referred to.

VIII.

Cormac mac Airt, whose reign is put by the annalists in the third century, is next to Conchobar the most famous king in Irish heroic legend. He was reputed to have obtained from the Tuatha Dá Danaan a collection of several of their talismans. The text *Echtra Cormaic*, which relates this story, is preserved only in fourteenth century MSS., but it is mentioned in the list of sagas in *Rawlinson B 512*¹ and the incidents which it relates are doubtless matters of ancient tradition. This seems certain in spite of the fact pointed out by Nutt,² that the present form of the *Echtra Cormaic* (Adventures of Cormac) has been worked over and allegorical features have been introduced;³

Cormac mac Airt was inveigled into intrusting his two children and his wife to a fairy messenger, receiving in exchange a branch of silver bearing golden apples. When the branch was shaken it gave forth marvellous music.

But Cormac grew dissatisfied, and made his way to Manannán's palace in the Other World. Here he bore himself so well that Manannán restored to him his wife and children, and moreover made him a present of the marvellous branch and of the Golden Cup of Truth. This cup had such a property that it would break if three lies were told, but three true things would make it whole again.

Cormac then retired for the night in the fairy palace.⁴ "On the morrow morning when Cormac arose, he found himself on the green of Tara, with his wife and his son and daughter, and having also his Branch and his

¹ M. d'Arbois de Jubainville attributes this list to the tenth century: *Cours*, I, 355.

² *Voyage of Bran*, I, 192.

³ Text and translation by W. Stokes, *Irische Texte*, III, 189-229, from the *Book of Ballymote* and the *Yellow Book of Lecan*.

⁴ *L. c.*, p. 216, text 198.

Cup. Now that was afterwards called 'Cormac's Cup,' and it was used to distinguish between truth and falsehood with the Gael. Howbeit, as had been promised him by Manannán, it remained not after Cormac's death."

This cup and branch are marvellous belongings like the spear and the grail. Manannán's palace, like the Grail Castle, disappears over night. The cup goes back ultimately to fairy land, just as the grail remained not forever in Britain.

The same text relates that Cormac possessed a Caldron of Restitution,¹ "*Coire aisic.*"

"It used to return and give to every company their suitable food." . . . "No meat was found therein save what would supply the company, and the food proper for each would be taken thereout."

Also, a little farther on, this text assigns to Cormac the possession of Cuchulinn's sword,² "*Cruadin coiditcheann.*" This sword shone at night like a candle. And the narrative concludes :

"Neither battle nor combat was ever gained against that sword and against him who held it in his hand. And it is the third best treasure that was in Erin, namely, Cormac's Cup and his Branch and his Sword."

It is not said in this text that Cormac's Caldron of Restitution or his sword came originally from the Tuatha Dá Danaan, but the student of Irish story will, I think, feel sure from the above particulars that the ancient Irish believed that King Cormac possessed some or all of the talismans of the Tuatha Dá Danaan. The modern Irish version of the *Echtra Cormaic*, printed and translated by S. H. O'Grady,³ makes Manannán give to Cormac, besides the Cup of Truth and the Branch, a magic Table Cloth, *sgóraid*, which furnished all food, however dainty, that might be demanded of it. That Cormac possessed magic

¹ *L. c.*, pages 205-6.

² *L. c.*, pages 218-20; text 199-202.

³ *Ossianic Society*, III, 212-229 (1857).

talismans seems a widespread and continuous tradition in Ireland.

Among the possessions of King Cormac, Irish tradition tells of a marvellous spear called the *Crimall* or “bloody spear,” an epithet suggesting that it bled of itself, like the spear of the Grail Castle. This *Crimall* was the same or at least was confused with the *LUIN* of Celtechar.¹ In any case one can hardly doubt that it belonged with Cormac’s other possessions, and came, like them, from the Tuatha Dá Danaan.

IX.

One of the most significant of Arthurian tales for the study of the bleeding spear is the story of Balin and the Dolorous Stroke, well known to English readers from the second book of Malory’s *Morte Darthur*. I summarize the story from the *Huth Merlin*² which represents the French source of Malory’s second book:—

Balin’s first adventure was the untying of the sword “as estranges renges”³ from its straps, a feat which only the bravest knight in the land could perform.⁴ Balin girded on this sword, in addition to his own,

¹The opinion of Hennessy, R. I. A., *Todd Lect. Series*, I, 1, xiv. (The blazing spear of Lugh named Slaughterer was also called “the red spear,” see above, p. 19).

²Ed. Paris et Ulrich, *Société des Anciens Textes* (1886).

³*Op. cit.*, I, 213-5. This precise phrase is not in the text but we are told, “n’iot nul qui les renges [de l’espée] peust desnoer.”

⁴As the story stands, the sword “as estranges renges” is not connected with the Dolorous Stroke; for we are expressly told that Balin did not use that sword in the adventure of the Dolorous Stroke, but his own weapon. (I, 253, II, 27.) However, anyone who has observed how constantly a sword corresponding to the sword “as estranges renges” is associated with the bleeding lance of the Grail Castle cannot doubt that its presence here in a story of the lance is not accidental. In a more primitive form of the story it must have been this sword which broke in Balin’s hand. Then the condition of things at the Castle of Pellam (Pellehan) when Balin left it would be exactly as described in Wauchier, *viz.*: the sword of “estranges renges” broken, the king’s relative dead, the king himself wounded, and his land laid waste.

contrary to the advice of Merlin, and was thenceforth called the Knight of the Two Swords. Merlin then predicted that Balin would deliver the Dolorous Stroke and would thus put three kingdoms into distress for twenty-two years, and would wound the most holy man there was in the world.¹

King Arthur, while alone one day in his tent at the hour of noon, beheld a strange knight accompanied by a damsels ride past.² Arthur sent Balin to bid the strangers turn back. Balin, after taking oath to assume if necessary the strange knight's quest, accomplished the errand.³ But the strange knight had returned only a short distance in Balin's company before he fell to the ground with a sudden cry and died. Balin could see nothing except that a spear had been thrust through the stranger, leaving a truncheon still in the wound. Balin was deeply grieved and pledged the damsels that he would follow her, and would avenge the death of her knight. He mounted the dead knight's horse and, giving her to carry the truncheon of the spear, rode away after the damsels. Merlin appeared and buried the slain knight.⁴

After this Balin fell in with a knight hunting, who insisted on joining in the quest. Balin told the stranger that the slain knight could be avenged only by means of the "tronchon meismes" with which he had been killed, and which the damsels carried.⁵ But as they were riding through a cemetery the newcomer too was slain like the first knight by an invisible foe.⁶

Merlin appeared disguised in white⁷ and told them that their invisible adversary was Garlan,⁸ brother to King Pellehan. He urged Balin to for-

¹ I, 231. In an episode, which I omit at this place, Balin slays "Lancer, fuis au roi d'Irlande." The mention of Ireland may have a bearing on the question of a Celtic source.

² I, 275.

³ I, 277.

⁴ I, 279.

⁵ II, 6, Garlan, like the Irish Cuchulinn, could evidently be slain only by his own weapon.

⁶ II, 9.

⁷ In the Spanish version, *Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, ed. Bonilla, Madrid, vi, 103, we are told that Merlin was clad in white "por ser desconocido." The appearance at crucial points in the story of an important character (a magician) in different manifestations is a well known feature of Irish tales. See *Studies and Notes*, VIII, 100 ff. and cf. 201. The successive appearances of Merlin in different disguises and unrecognized by Balin goes far by itself to prove the Celtic character of the story.

⁸ II, 7. The *Huth Merlin* here reads "Gallan," a form evidently due to the Germanic *Weland* (Valland). But in most places the French reads "Garlan," cf. II, 21, 22, 24, 26; and Malory has always "Garlon." The latter form seems to me more original, and I should identify him with Gwrnach the giant, see above, pp. 26-7; and, as Nitze suggests, with King Gurgalon who in the *Perlesvau* owns the bleeding sword. Garlan is a

sake the quest and not to strike the Dolorous Stroke. " You will deliver a blow from which there will be so great grief in the realm of Logres that never befell a greater grief or pestilence by the blow of sword."

They came next to a castle where every visiting damsels was forced to yield a basin of her blood to cure a lady.¹ By a trick Balin was separated from his damsels and was shut up within the castle. He heard her screams and mounted in his desperation into a high tower. " Lors dist a soi meismes que mieus vient il morir, se a morir vient, que la damoisiele muire par defaute de lui, si se saingne et se commande a nostre siegneur et saut erramment de la tour a val. Et li avint si bien que il ne se conquaissa de riens. Et puis monte tout contremont le fossé. . . . Et cil qui orent veut le saut qu'il avoit fait sont tuit esbahi de la merveille qu'il en orent."²

In spite of this hero's leap Balin arrived too late to save the damsels from being bled. However she survived the bleeding and continued the journey with Balin. The grievous custom was kept up till Perceval's sister accomplished the adventure and healed the lady.³

After they had journeyed many days, and had come to a country where they scarcely understood the language, Balin and the damsels arrived at a castle where they were bountifully entertained. Balin inquired concerning a lamentation which came from an adjoining chamber. The host said that it was his son groaning, who had been wounded at the hour of noon through enchantment. Balin then declared that the wound was doubtless

magician and goes invisible like Góibniu, the Irish smith. The name of such a magician might easily be changed by French romancers to Galan. Cf. my remarks on the variation between *Gaban* and *Galan*, in the *Polistorie*, as the maker of Gawain's sword: *Modern Philology*, I, 100.

¹ II, 13-14. No one would urge that this forcible bleeding of guests is a distinctively Celtic feature. Yet it may well have formed a part of the Celtic Tale of Balin. The use of blood to dispel enchantment is common in Celtic tales. See the favorite Irish story called *The Fairy Palace of the Quicken Trees*, where the blood of the sons of a king is required to release Finn and his warriors: MacDougall, *Folk and Hero Tales*, 58 and 270-5. A list of versions of this story is in *Studies and Notes*, VIII, 209-10, footnotes. General references to cure by the use of blood are collected by Mead, *Selections from Malory*, p. 266.

² II, 15. The basis of this incident is perhaps the Celtic " hero's leap," well known in ancient Irish story. See Thurneysen, *Keltoromanisches*, p. 19; and for Cuchulinn's *cor n-iach n-eirred* or "salmon-leap" executed over castle walls, cf. *Fled Bricrend*, ed. Henderson, *Irish Texts Soc.*, II, §§ 87, 88, from LU.

³ II, 19.

due to Garlan who rides invisible. The host readily agreed to this explanation since he once had struck down Garlan in a tournament, and Garlan had vowed to secure vengeance within a year. He told Balin that Pellehan, king of Listinois, would hold a great feast "au chastiel del pallès perilleus,"¹ at which feast Garlan would serve. "My son," he added, "can only be healed by the blood of Garlan."

The host guided Balin and the maiden to the castle of King Pellehan. No knight might enter the feast unless he were accompanied by his sister or his "amie"; the host was, therefore, left outside.² The attendants sought to remove Balin's sword, but he refused,³ saying that to wear his

¹ II, 22. Balin's journey to this perilous castle is evidently patterned after the Celtic Otherworld Journey (see my "Knight of the Lion," in these *Publications*, xx, 676 ff.). The damsel messenger and guide, the journey to a very distant land, the Hospitable Host, who entertains the adventurer for the night, and points out the way to the mysterious castle; and the combat with the Red Magician, are stock incidents of the Otherworld Journey. Garlan the Red Magician, called "cel rous chevalier" and "Gallans li rous," should be compared with the red "riders of the *sidh*" in *Dá Derga's Brugh*, p. 20, above. "Red were they all together with their teeth." "We ride the horses of the *sidh*, and though we are alive, we are dead." The thoughtful student of Celtic story will perceive that the Hospitable Host and the Red Magician were originally fairy chieftains at war with each other. The Host had been worsted and was seeking the help of a mortal hero to slay his foe. Such is the situation in the *Serglige Conculaind* (in LU), where Cuchulinn slew three fairy usurpers; in the *Echtra Lóegaire* (in LL), where Lóegaire slew a fairy adversary, Goll, and restored his Hospitable Host, Fiachna, to the dominion of fairy-land; in the Welsh "Pwyll and Arawn" one of the four ancient *Mabinogion*, and in the mediæval Irish story *In Gilla Decair*. Such, as I sought to demonstrate seven years ago ("Iwain," *Studies and Notes*, vol. VIII), must have been the original situation in Chrétien's *Yvain*, where the Hospitable Host and the Red Champion of the Fountain were evidently foes. But I hope to return to this matter in another article.

² Such was the custom of the ancient Irish. When Eochaid Airem became high king of Ireland, and invited his subjects to a feast, the men returned this answer: "They would not come till he had a wife, because no man went to a feast at Tara without his wife." Zimmer, *Gött. gel. Anz.*, 1890, p. 519, note, quoting from LU, 129b, 25 ff.

³ It was the rule in Conchobar's palace at Emain Macha to pile the arms of the chiefs out of reach at a feast, lest during the revel somebody should run amuck for a rough word. "Cech ní gargg ro-chluintís," see LL, 106b, 49.

sword at the king's court was the custom of his country, and if they would not suffer him to follow the custom of his country he would go away to the place from which he had come.¹ So they allowed him to wear his sword. At table each knight sat with his "amie" opposite to him.² Balin learned from the knight at his left that Garlan was, "cel rous chevalier a cele sore chavaleure," who was serving the tables. Balin waited till "Gallans li rous" came up to him and then slew him with a blow of his sword. He also thrust the truncheon, which the damsel had brought, through the seneschal's body and cried out to the host to take of the blood to heal his son.

But King Pellehan, angry at the death of his brother, seized a wooden beam and attacked Balin. In the struggle Balin's sword broke.³

[At this point two entire leaves, ff. 136 and 137, are missing from the unique Huth ms., but the story may be supplied from the ancient Spanish version].⁴

Balin now weaponless and closely pursued by King Pellam fled from room to room in search of some implement of defence.⁵ "And he looked

¹ Moral pressure exerted upon a host to extort a favor is common in Celtic tales. See Kittredge, *Studies and Notes*, VIII, 210-11.

² II, 24. The suggestion that this arrangement at table was a Celtic custom, is due to Miss Lillian Huggett, a graduate student at Northwestern University, who is preparing a paper on the Celtic elements in the Tale of Balin. ³ II, 27.

⁴ "Demanda del Sancto Grial," or as the editor has entitled it "El Baladro del Sabio Merlin," *Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, ed. Bonilla, Madrid (1907), vi, 91-120.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 109: "E miro por todo e visto otra camara abierta, y entro dentro, pensando de ay fallar alguna cosa con que se defendiesse, y el rey, que lo seguia muy ayna, quando quiso entrar oyo una boz que le dixo: 'Por tu mal ay entraras, que no eres tal que deuas entrar en tan alto lugar santo,' y entendio bien la boz, mas no dexo de entrar; e visto la camara tan hermosa e rica, [p. 110] que no penso que en el mundo no pudiesse auer su par: e la camara era muy grande y quadrada, de muy buen olor, assi como si todas las buenas especies del mundo ay fuessen, y en medio de aquella camara auia una gran mesa e de plata por razon, puesta en quatro pies de plata; y sobre aquella mesa avia un gran bacin de oro, e dentro en aquel bacin estaua una lança derecha, la punta ayuso, y quien arriba la mirasse, marauillarse ya, ca no estaua fincada, ni acostada, ni assentada a ninguna parte. Y el cauallero de las dos espadas [Balin] visto la lança, mas no la miro bien, e el fue por la tomar, e dixole una boz: '¡No la tones, peccador!' mas no dexo de tomarla por esso con anbas manos, e firio con ella a Pelean, que contra el venia, tan rezio, que le passo anbas las cuxas, y el rey se sintio mal ferido, cayo en tierra; y el cauallero torno la lança do la tomara, e tan ayna como la puso se tuuo como antes."

everywhere and saw another chamber open and entered into it, thinking to find there something with which to defend himself, and the King, who was following very closely, when he sought to enter heard a voice that said to him : 'To your misfortune will you enter there ; for you are not such an one that you ought to enter into so very holy a place.' He [Balin] heard indeed the voice but he did not refrain from entering ; and he saw the chamber so beautiful and rich that he did not suppose that in the world could exist its equal. And the chamber was very large and square, of a very rich fragrance as if all the fine spices in the world had been there. And in the midst of the chamber was a great table, and of very rich silver, placed upon four legs of silver ; and upon this table was a great basin of gold, and within this basin stood a lance, perpendicularly, point downward, and any one looking at it would have marvelled because it was not inserted, nor supported, nor fastened anywhere. And the Knight of the Two Swords saw the lance but did not consider it carefully, and he was on the point of taking it, and a voice said to him : 'Do not take it, sinner !' But he did not refrain on this account from taking it with both hands, and he struck with it Pellean who was coming against him so vehemently that he thrust it through both of his thighs, and the King perceiving himself severely wounded fell to the earth. And the knight returned the lance to the place from which he had taken it, and, when he had replaced it, it stood as before.'

At this instant the castle walls began to totter and fall, and there was heard a voice which said :¹

"Now commence the adventures of the Adventurous Realm, which will never cease until shall be dearly paid for the deed of that one who took with his filthy and vile hands the Sacred Lance, and therewith wounded the best man among the princes, and the great Master will take vengeance for it so that shall suffer in consequence those who may deserve to do so.

And all those in the palace lay as dead for two days and nights. It was found that more than half of them were really dead and that the surrounding country was laid waste.

Merlin, who was aware that this destruction could only have been wrought by a stroke of "la lança vengadora," appeared, and came to the door of the chamber, "do la sancta lança estaua y el santo vaso que llaman el Santo Grial," (where was the holy lance, and the holy vessel that is called the Holy Grail). Merlin found a white monk, and having

¹ "Agora comiençan las aventuras del reyno auenturado, que jamas nunca falleceran, fasta que sea caramente comprado el fecho de aquel que la santa lança tomo con sus manos lixosas e vites, con que llago al mejor hombre de los príncipes, y el gran maestro tomara dende venganca, assi que lazeraran por ende [de sic] los que lo merescieren."

caused him to put on the garments of the Mass, made him enter the chamber and fetch Balin out. Balin revived from his swoon when Merlin cried out : “ Baalin leuantate ! ” Merlin shewed him that both his host who had accompanied him, and his damsels were dead under the fallen walls of the castle.

After revealing himself, for Balin had not recognized him,¹ and after procuring Balin a horse, Merlin disappeared. Balin rode off and saw on all sides people dead and wounded. From that time the realm of Listinois was called “ li roiames de terre gaste.”²

Balin was afterwards slain in a duel with his brother, in “ l’isle Merlin,” or “ l’isle de merveilles.” In this island Merlin established a number of marvels : a perilous couch, Balin’s sword on the hilt of which he inscribed “ De ceste morra Gavains,” a bridge of dread, and a sword fixed in a block of marble which only Galahad should draw out.³

The story just summarized demands, of course, a sequel which should narrate the achievement of the grail and the termination of the Adventures of Britain. But neither Malory nor the “ Demanda ” (the *Huth Merlin* breaks off before this point), gives a conclusion which can at all represent the original form. Both indeed represent Galahad as winning the grail, as restoring the broken sword, and as curing the wounded king with blood from the bleeding lance ; both however call the wounded king “ Pelles ” (not Pellam or Pellehan), and ascribe his injury, not to a thrust by the Knight of the Two Swords but to his own fault. Because of his “ hardiness ” in handling the mysterious sword, says Malory, xvii, 5, he received the wound.

The original conclusion is no doubt more nearly represented in the extract printed by Sommer,⁴ from ms. Bib. Nat. fr. 343 :

Galahad arrived at Corbenic, and entered “ la mestre forteresce très devant le palleis aventureux.” He and his companions left their arms at the door. An old man after leading Galahad from chamber to chamber

¹ At this point the *Huth* ms. recommences.

² Paris et Ulrich, *Huth Merlin*, II, 29-30.

³ II, 57-60.

⁴ *Romania*, xxxvi, 573-9, (1907).

pointed him to the room where the wounded king lay, and bade him enter alone : “ Entres i por la guerison del roi Maahaigne qui leienz a longue-ment trauuaillie non mie por sa deserte mes por le pechie d'autrui.” Galahad entered : “ Et voit maintenant en mi leu de la chambre qui mult estoit granz et riche la table dargent et le santime vessel si hautement et si bel arorne com nostre estoire a ia autre foiz devise.” . . . et il voit tres de sus la table dargent celle meesmes lance dont la santime car ihesu christ avoit este navree. Et ele estoit mise en lair la pointe de souz et li fust de sus. et pendoit merueilleusement que mortex hom ne peust pas ueoir qui la sostenoit. et sachiez que ele rendoit par la pointe, gotes de sanc qui cheoient en un moult riche vesse dargent assez espessemement. Mes apres ce que eles estoient venues el vexel ne pooit nus savoir qui li sanz devenoit. Quant Galahaz voit ceste merveille il pense bien maintenant que ce est sanz faille la lance aventureuse.” A voice bade Galahad take the vessel of blood beneath the lance, and anoint the wounded king therewith. As Galahad approached Pellean, “ cil descouvre ses cuisses, et dit, veez ci li doloreux cop que li chevaliers as deus espees fist.” When three drops of blood had fallen from the vessel on the wound, King Pellean arose cured, and embraced Galahad. Lance and Cup ascended mysteriously into the sky. “ En tel maniere avint de la lance vencheresse que ele se parte del roiaume de Logres, voiant Galahaz, et s'en ala es cieux, com la veraie estoire le tesmoigne.”

This passage agrees with the Tale of Balin in describing the chamber of the Grail as large and rich, in mentioning a table of silver, and the Lance of Vengeance, which miraculously floated in the air above it, point downward, and in referring the wound of King Pellean to the Dolorous Stroke that the Knight of the Two Swords [Balin] dealt.

Any reader of this Tale of Balin and the Dolorous Stroke will be impressed with its pagan atmosphere, and with the barbaric extravagance of its details, which resemble the exaggerated fancies of the ancient Celts. But no one has ever called attention to the surprising number of admittedly Celtic features that it contains.

Not to dwell on the incidents borrowed from the Celtic Otherworld Journey : the damsels messenger, the wandering to a remote land, the Hospitable Host who acts as guide to the mysterious palace, and Garlan the Red Magician ;

the tale contains, besides, the following features which are characteristic of Celtic story. The enchanter Merlin, who appears at every crucial turn in the plot, and is always unrecognized, at least at first; the invisible Garlan, whose fairy arrows fly at noontide, and who is invulnerable except to his own weapons; Balin's hero's leap; the prohibition against bringing arms into a royal banquet hall; the moral pressure put upon a host to secure a boon; the refusal to admit a warrior to the feast without a lady companion; the peculiar way in which the warriors are seated at table each opposite to his lady; and, finally, the destruction or enchantment of three kingdoms that followed Balin's stroke; are all features of common occurrence in the ancient Irish sagas.

The overwhelming evidence of the Celtic origin of the Balin story has never been presented; nor has anyone, I think, called attention to the fact that this story is in the whole range of Arthurian romance, so far as I am acquainted with it, the most coherent and detailed explanation of the machinery of the grail quest. It tells why and by whom the king was wounded and his land laid waste. Moreover so closely does the apparatus of the grail quest in the Tale of Balin correspond to that of Gawain's visit to the Grail Castle as related in Wauchier's continuation of the *Perceval* (the correspondence is closer than to the conclusion of the *Demanda* given above), that it seems almost certain that the two tales must have a common origin in some lost romance, and must be related to each other as introduction and conclusion to the Enchantment of Britain. Attention has already been called to the strikingly barbarous and pagan details of Wauchier's account of Gawain's grail quest.

Both tales open in a precisely similar way: We find King Arthur in the Balin story, and in Wauchier, Queen Guinevere, in a pavilion pitched beside a meadow. A strange

knight passes who refuses at first to return but is persuaded to do so under Balin's (Gawain's) safe conduct, and is presently slain by a mysterious knight who rides invisible. Both Balin and Gawain are urged by the dying knight to take his armor, mount his steed, and undertake the quest. In Wauchier, Gawain learns from the dying knight that this steed will carry him on the road that he ought to go, and will guide his journey,—a circumstance hinted at in the Tale of Balin. Gawain's adventure at the Chapel of the Black Hand probably corresponds to Balin's at the cemetery. Both adventurers travel far before they reach the Grail Castle. Both stories know the broken sword, and both conclude by an explicit statement that the kingdom of Llogres¹ was destroyed by the dolorous stroke (in Wauchier of a sword, in the Tale of Balin of a lance) and by a reference to the Waste Kingdom.

The account of Galahad's curing of the wounded king, quoted from the French ms. Bibl. Nat. fr. 343, also agrees with Wauchier in several striking details. In both the lance bleeds into a cup very plentifully. The channel by which according to Wauchier the blood was led without the hall "so that Gawain might not see whither it ran,"² is doubtless hinted at in the Balin story by the words: "Mes apres ce que eles [the blood drops] estoient venues el vexel ne pooit nus savoir que li sanz devenoit."

These relationships will be explained if we suppose that the Tale of Balin and Wauchier's Gawain story represent the introduction and the termination of some lost grail story, which must have been of an exceedingly primitive character, and may have been one of the pagan originals to which Chrétien and the other grail writers ultimately go back.

¹ *Merlin*, II, 4, "Llogres," (see p. 44 above), elsewhere "Listinois."

² See pp. 14-5 above, and for the last phrase Miss Weston, *Sir Gawain at the Grail Castle*, p. 22, translating from ms. 12,576, Bib. Nat.

X.

The plot by which the Grail Adventures are set in motion is in the Tale of Balin sufficiently simple. A fierce warrior, offended at a wrong done him, and in spite of a difficulty about carrying arms on such an occasion, forced his way into a royal banqueting hall at meal time. He recognized his foe in the person of a near relative of the king, who was serving at table, and killed him at a blow. Attacked by the king, he seized a marvellous spear which he found in the palace, and struck his assailant down. He escaped after causing great destruction, and left the king wounded and incapacitated for further kingship.

The barbaric elements of the tale thus briefly summarized prove it to be a euhemerization of some half-mythological Celtic story. The interpolated character of the Christian explanation of King Pellehan and of the Lance, which is attached, is sufficiently obvious. One learns with astonishment that Pellehan is "the most holy man in the world," so long as he keeps with him in his castle his brother, the coward Garlan, who, riding invisible, strikes down innocent knights. One is astounded to have the Lance explained as the relic of the Crucifixion. Its destructive powers, so frightful that a blow of it left a wound that could not be healed, and devastated three countries, as well as its name, "La Lanche Vencheresse," show that it belongs in origin among the deadly weapons of Celtic mythology and legend.

For this reason a parallel which I have pointed out,¹ between Balin's dolorous stroke, and an ancient Irish story concerning the mischief wrought by one of the Irish marvellous spears, must be felt to possess significance.

¹ In a previous article, *Mod. Philology*, vii, 203-6.

King Cormac, one of the central figures in Irish legend, owned a collection of marvellous objects, derived from the Tuatha Dá Danaan, and roughly corresponding, as has been shown, to the talismans of the Grail Castle. Among these was the *Crimall* or “bloody spear.”¹ One of the ancient Irish law treatises, the *Book of Aicill*, begins with an account of how Cormac was blinded by a thrust of this spear. The ms. is of the fifteenth century, but the text of the *Book of Aicill* was written down, it is believed, in the tenth century;² and although this introductory story is later, it can scarcely be more recent than the eleventh century.³ Text and translation may be found in the *Ancient Laws of Ireland*:⁴

“The place of this book is Aicill close to Tara, and its time is the time of Coirpri Lifechair son of Cormac, and its author is Cormac, and the cause of its being composed was the blinding of the eye of Cormac by Aengus Gabhuaidech.” [A. of the terrible or venomous spear]. . . . “This Aengus was a champion who was avenging a family quarrel in the territories of the Luighne.”⁵ . . . [He was told that his sister had been dishonored by Cellach son of Cormac and resolved on vengeance]. . . . “He went forward toward Tara and reached Tara after sunset. And it was a prohibited thing at Tara to bring a hero’s arms into it after sunset; so that no arms could be there except the arms that happened to be within it. And Aengus took the *Crimall* [“ornamented spear” according to the *Laws*; “bloody spear” according to O’Curry⁶] of Cormac down from its rack⁷ and gave Cellach the son of Cormac a blow of it and killed him;

¹ See p. 23 above.

² See Zimmer, *Haupt’s Zt.*, xxxv, 85–87.

³ Unlike Cormac stories of later origin it does not connect Finn with Cormac.

⁴ The *Senchas Mór, etc.*, III, 82–84.

⁵ “Airi echta in tAengus Gabuaidech, ac dígail greisi ceniul atuathaib Luigne” (*op. cit.*, p. 82).

⁶ *Ms. Materials*, pp. 48, 512; *Manners and Customs*, II, 325–6.

⁷ Compare, in the *Acallamh na Senórach*, (ed. Stokes, *Irische Texte*, IV, 1, 47; translation in *Silva Gad.*, II, 142), how Ilbhrec took down from its rack, at a time of need, the venomous spear of Fiacha which came originally from the Tuatha Dá Danaan; see p. 4 above.

and its edge grazed one of Cormac's eyes and destroyed it: and in drawing it back out of Cellach its handle struck the chief of the king's household of Tara in the back and killed him. And it was a prohibited thing that one with a blemish should be king at Tara.¹ And Cormac was therefore sent out to be cured to Aicill close to Tara: and Tara could be seen from Aicill but Aicill could not be seen from Tara. And the sovereignty of Ireland was given to Coirpri Lifechair son of Cormac."

No careful study is needed to trace the parallelism between this Irish tale and the story of Balin and the Dolorous Stroke. In both, the hero comes to the palace of a king at the time of a feast as an avenger of a personal wrong. In both is the prohibition against carrying arms into a royal palace. Such a prohibition is in entire accordance with ancient Irish custom ("geis") but is not very natural in mediaeval France. Balin, indeed, remarks that to wear one's sword at a feast is the custom of *his* country. In both tales the mischief is wrought by a spear kept in the palace as a relic or marvel. In both cases the king's chief steward or seneschal is slain, although not quite in the same manner. In both, the aggressor escapes and the king is left wounded in such a way as to be incapacitated for kingship.

The redactor of this account of the Blinding of Cormac told it as history, and perhaps did not himself regard the *Crimall* as anything more than one of the crown jewels. From what has been learned concerning the marvellous character of Irish weapons, however, it is difficult to avoid suspecting that we have here a euhemerization, such as was thought proper in a book of law, of some ancient half-

¹ "Ocus geis do Temraig airm laich do breith indte iar fuined ngreine, acht na hairm do ecmaitfr indte [budein]. Ocus ro gab Aengus in crimall Cormaic anuar da healchaing ocus tuc buille di a Cellach mac Cormaic, cor marbustar he; cor ben a heochair dar suil Cormaic co ro leth chaech hé; ocus ro ben a hurlunn a ndruim rechtaire na Temrach aca tarraing a Cellach, co ro marbustar he. Ocus ba geis rig co nainim do bith a Temraig" (*op. cit.*, p. 82).

mythological tale concerning the destruction wrought by a spear from the *sídh*—a tale like that of the Enchantment of Britain, from which it has been suggested comes the Dolorous Stroke. Only in this way can we understand the remarkable parallelism of plot between the “Blinding of Cormac” and “Balin’s Dolorous Stroke.”

That Cormac was blinded by a spear thrust, and abdicated his throne in accordance with Irish custom (“*geis*”) which forbade that a man having any blemish should rule at Tara, is a circumstance often referred to in Irish story and annals, and several versions of the incident exist. The Blinding of Cormac forms a part of the tale called *The Expulsion of the Dessa*, which appears in two principal versions. The older version is found in two fourteenth century mss., Laud 610, and Rawlinson B. 502,¹ but has been shown by Zimmer to date from 750 A. D.² The later version is in LU, 53^a–54^b; and in H. 3. 17, and H. 2. 15.³ This version Zimmer thinks was the work of Cuan O’Lócháin who died in 1024. O’Lócháin, he thinks, confused King Cormac of the third century with Cormac Bishop of Cashel who died in 903.

These versions of the Blinding of Cormac differ from that in the *Book of Aicill* by representing Aengus as having brought his deadly spear with him, instead of finding it at the palace of Cormac. They supply however several details which, on the whole, greatly strengthen an hypothesis that the “Blinding of Cormac” and the “Dolorous Stroke” have their source in Celtic tales that belonged to one and the same type.

¹ The Laud text is printed in *Ériu*, III, 135–142 (1907); the Rawlinson text has been printed and translated by Kuno Meyer in *Y Cymmrodor*, XIV, 101–135 (1901).

² *Haupt’s Zeitschrift*, XXXV, 121 ff., (1891).

³ The text from the last two mss. has been printed in *Anecdota from Irish MSS.*, I, 15–24 (1907).

In these versions Aengus is described not only as *airi echta*,¹ "an avenging champion," but as "a savage, fierce man,"² or according to LU, as "a rough warrior."³ (Cf. "Balaain le Sauvage." *Huth Merlin*, I, 225, etc.)

These versions not only call the spear "terrible" but add that it was "poisonous,"⁴ and that it had two, or according to the later version, three, chains upon it. Each of these chains, when the spear was drawn, demanded the life of a man,⁵ or according to other mss., each chain required three men to carry it.⁶ "It was from these chains that his [Aengus'] name was Oengus of the Dread Lance."⁷ Whichever ms. one follows it is clear that the spear was a marvellous one, and was probably confused or perhaps identified with the LUIN of Celtnchar. The LUIN, it will be remembered, required three men to hold it.⁸

Both versions of the *Expulsion of the Dessa* sum up the destruction wrought by the spear of Aengus in a way that suggests the Dolorous Stroke :

"So there fell Cormac's son, and his steward, and Cormac's eye was put out, and nobody was able to lay hold of Aengus before he escaped into his house and he killed nine of Cormac's warriors as they were pursuing him."⁹ Cormac was not king after that but lived the rest of his life in retirement at Aicill near to Tara. And Aengus was ever afterward called "Aengus of the Terrible Spear."

¹ See p. 53 above.

² "Fear garg amnus," *Anecdota*, I, 15, l. 15.

³ "laech garb," LU, 53a.

⁴ "gaibuaifnech idon nemnech," *ibid.*

⁵ "Ar ba hécen fer cechtar a da slabrad side dogres" (Rawlinson B. 502), *Y Cymroddor*, XIV, 104, and footnote on p. 105.

⁶ "Triar fer cach a slabraidd ig a tarraing" (H. 2. 15), *Anecdota*, I, 15, ll. 17-18.

⁷ "Is arna slabradaib tra ba Hoengus Gæbuaibthech a ainm-seom," *Y Cymroddor*, XIV, 106-7. ⁸ P. 18 above.

⁹ "Immale dorochratar in mac ocus in rechtairi ocus romebaid stíl Cormaic ocus ni roachtas greim fair corrócht a theg ocus romarb nonbur do churadaib Cormaic occá thafund" (*Ériu*, III, 136. The translation is my own).

XI.

In the preceding pages it has been pointed out that neither Chrétien nor Wolfram gives any Christian coloring to the Lance, to which, however, they appear to attach as much importance as to the Grail. In neither of these writers has the Christianization of the Grail gone very far. The Lance is venomous, and, at least in Chrétien, enchanting the land. Such a venomously destructive lance is often described in Irish saga. Such a lance, with other fairy objects of marvellous attributes, was evidently a familiar object of quest on the part of Irish heroes.¹ Our oldest accounts of Arthur represent him as engaged in similar quests. All stories about the Grail are connected with King Arthur.² It is natural, therefore, to suppose that this connection is old, and goes back to Welsh or Breton tales of Arthurian quests. This supposition is further greatly strengthened by the whiteness or luminosity of Grail and Lance, which associates them with Arthur's other marvellous belongings, as for example with his gleaming sword Excalibur which has been proved identical with the Irish fairy sword *Caladbolg*. Grail, Lance, and Sword, therefore, go back in origin to the shining talismans of the Tuatha Dá Danaan, viz.: the Stone of Destiny, the Cauldron of Plenty, the Spear and the Sword of Lugh.

The investigation might have been brought to a close at this point (page 42 above) but it has gone on to consider the Arthurian Tale of Balin which seems to present the machinery of the grail quest in its most coherent form. To

¹ See "The Adventures of Cormac," p. 40 above, and especially "The Fate of the Children of Tuirenn," Joyce, *op. cit.*, pp. 36 ff.

²An apparent exception is the curious grail episode in the *Sone de Nausay*, ed. Goldschmidt; *Stuttgart Litt. Verein*, vol. 216, (1902).

the Tale of Balin and the Dolorous Stroke has been found in ancient Irish a parallel, which if not absolutely convincing, at least demands explanation. The most rational explanation is, that Arthurian story and Irish tale are alike partial rationalizations of ancient mythological Celtic narratives concerning the destruction wrought by a weapon from the *sídh*. This conclusion accords perfectly with my explanation of the Grail Castle and its contents as identical in origin with the fairy palace of the Tuatha Dá Danaan.

The Irish talismans were wont to be found in a marvellous abode, difficult of access, and, like the Grail Castle, apt to vanish over night. Its inhabitants were shape-shifters like the Fisher King. King Cormac, who occupied in Irish legend a position not unlike that of King Arthur among the Welsh, was believed to have had possession of these talismans. The tale of King Cormac's wounding by one of his talismans, the "bloody spear," has a plot almost identical with the account of the wounding of the Grail King by Balin the Savage. Garlan the magician of the Grail Castle resembles Góibniu the guardian in Irish legend of the fiery LUIN. Nearly every incident in the Tale of Balin can be paralleled from Irish story.¹

In view of these facts it is not absurd to see in the similarity of plot between the "Blinding of Cormac" and the "Tale of Balin," traces of a kindred origin in Celtic mythological tales of the same type; nor to believe that Garlan, who lives in the Castle of Spear and Grail, is independent in origin from the Germanic *Weland*, being in reality a Celtic smith or magician like Góibniu who in ancient Irish story held the flaming LUIN. But, whatever may be the final decision of scholars concerning the validity of the Blinding of Cormac parallel, the main conclusion of

¹ See above, p. 49.

this paper has an independent force, that in the Tuatha Dá Danaan palace with its marvels is to be sought the origin of the Grail Castle with its dish of plenty, its sword that broke in one peril and its perpetually bleeding spear.¹

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¹This article was written before I received Professor Nitze's interesting study of the Fisher King (these *Publications*, xxiv, 365-418), to which, however, I have been able to insert several references. Nitze's idea that the procession of the Grail Castle shows traces of a heathen ritual or cult is plausible, always premising that the traces of this ritual must have reached the French from the Bretons or Welsh. Nitze with excellent judgment, in my opinion, holds aloof (pp. 380, 395, note 1) from Miss Weston's attempt to explain Grail and Lance as phallic symbols, and from her appeal to practising mystics (see her *Legend of Sir Perceval*, II, pp. 253-4 ff.). Miss Weston's studies have been of value to all workers in the Arthurian field. She has held to what I regard as the common sense position that the Arthurian legends developed in Wales as well as (although not to the exclusion of) Brittany, and that they are the outcome of long growth rather than of literary invention. It is disappointing, therefore, to find her credulous of explanations furnished by modern occultists. This line of research seems as little likely to lead to scientific results as the discredited solar myth theory, upon which, by the way, Miss Weston has also cast a lingering eye.